



Industry Challenges
Anti-Gun Laws **10**

Knife Report:
In-Demand Blades **46**

Bowhunting
Business **50**

SHOOTING INDUSTRY®

THE INDUSTRY'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE — EST. 1955

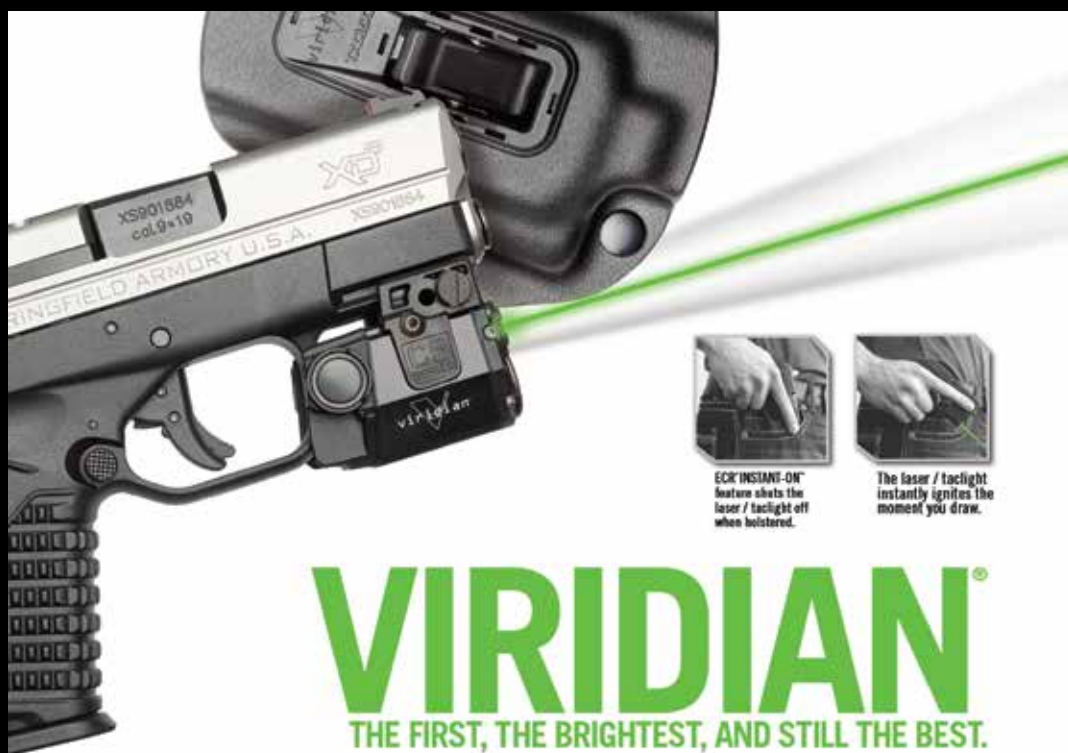
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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
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FEATURES

THE NEXT GENERATION

34YSSA Pinpoints Youth Programs
For Future Growth

.....By Steve Miller



BEE SWAX & APPLE SAUCE

36Here's The Buzz: Masters Sponsors
And Teams Are The Bee's Knees!

.....By Jade Moldé

STRENGTH IN HANDGUNS

42Dealers Identify And Respond To
Trends Shaping Handgun Sales

.....By Kevin Russelburg

KNIFE REPORT:

IN DEMAND BLADES AND MORE

46Future Looks Bright With Influx
Of Youth In Cutlery Market

.....By Pat Covert

BOWHUNTING BUSINESS

50Know What Sells For Bowhunters
And Keep Products In Inventory

.....By Carolee Anita Boyles

FOCUS: BOWHUNTING MARKET

54Sales For Bows,
Arrows Drive \$1 Billion Market

.....By Rob Southwick & Cody Larrimore

INDUSTRY NEWS

- 10 Industry Battles Against Anti-Gun Legislation, Sentiment
- 14 SCTP, PITA Team Up To Promote Youth Shooting
- 16 Kahr Firearms Group Opens Pennsylvania Headquarters
- 20 Vista Outdoor Expands Portfolio
- 21 NRA Foundation Awards College Scholarships
- 22 Colonial Shooting Academy Partners With Gunsite
- 24 Newsmakers

COLUMNS

- 6 **EDITOR'S NOTE** *Jade Moldé*
There's Still Nothing Like American-Made Ingenuity
- 26 **PERSONAL DEFENSE MARKET** *Massad Ayoob*
Selling "Slim-Nine" Handguns
- 28 **OUTDOOR MARKETPLACE** *Taylor Smithfield*
Loyalty Isn't For Sale: It's Earned
- 30 **ARMS & THE WOMAN** *Lisa Parsons-Wraith*
Gearing Up For Fall Turkey Season
- 32 **BACK BLAST & OTHER HOT GASES** *Commander Gilmore*
Why Would You Ever Leave?
- 62 **INDUSTRY WATCH** *Russ Thurman*
Hang On! There's Still A Year Of Presidential Campaigns

DEPARTMENTS

- | | | | |
|----|----------------------|----|--------------|
| 8 | Letters | 56 | New Products |
| 60 | Index Of Advertisers | 60 | Classifieds |

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It's no secret many sectors of today's U.S. economy rely on outsourcing manufacturing or products made/assembled abroad. While it does happen in our industry, there are many U.S. companies — and foreign manufacturers — with manufacturing facilities here and proudly have "Made In The USA" stamped, sewn or etched on their products. I recently had the opportunity to tour two manufacturers' facilities: BLACKHAWK!'s Manhattan, Mont., operation, as well as both manufacturing plants for Daniel Defense in Black Creek, Ga. and Ridgeland, S.C. It was remarkable to experience the "industry" behind the industry, and made me appreciate the process that goes in to bringing a product to market — from initial conception and design, to the finished product a customer can handle and purchase in your store.

In an encouraging sign, a number of manufacturers have recently made significant investments in American-made ingenuity. This issue's *Industry News* section alone highlights three companies that have announced various plans for expansion: Kahr Firearms Group, Leupold & Stevens and TriStar Arms. Several distributors, including RSR Group and Davidson's, have expanded to meet the needs of their customers.

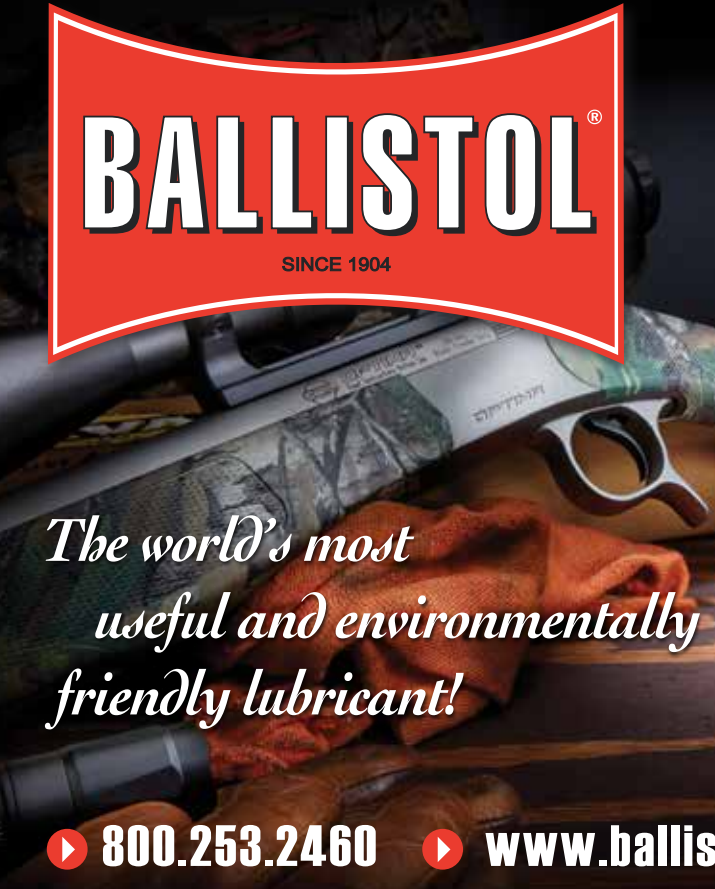
While providing American jobs, a company's decision to expand production capabilities means more products will be available for consumers. When the industry faced unprecedented demand in 2013, a common narrative developed: There wasn't enough product available to keep consumers engaged, with the



The pride in American manufacturing is on display at BLACKHAWK!'s Manhattan, Mont., facility. The plant also produces injection-molded products for other Vista Outdoor companies, including CCI, Champion, Outers and Gunslick Pro.

ammunition market being hit hardest. Now demand has reached a more manageable level, the industry is better prepared to handle a sudden spike in sales to meet the needs of its customers.

As we approach the end-of-the-year buying season, what has your store done to prepare for increased traffic? I'd like to hear from you; send an email to editor@shootingindustry.com. ☺



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A Welcome Sales Bump

Similar to what's been reported ("June's Jump Surprises, Creates Much Speculation," *Industry Watch*, Aug. 2015), we had a roughly 10 percent increase in the month of June; it was kind of shocking to see. The biggest part of the increase (from our experience) was the amount of deals/discounts awarded by distributors and manufacturers. Several of them are still feeling the effects of the 2013 scare and had inventory to move.

The amount of women gun buyers is at an all-time high in my area. Another possibility for a sales jump could be tax-free weekends. I'm not sure if other states have them, but in Mississippi, we have a Second Amendment tax-free weekend the first weekend in September.

Justin Hardy, Manager
Rock House Pawn
Meridian, Miss.

Breaking Down Barriers

I just read your *Editor's Note*, "Reaching a Developing Demographic" (August 2015), I can't wait to read the full report of the U.S. Hispanic Firearms Market. As a first generation Mexican-American I'm part of that market — I'm also very curious to find out how to advertise to the Hispanic market. I own a small security company/FFL and have seen many "stale, pale, male" customers and want to add this growing population to my roster of satisfied customers.

Guns and shooting have always been a part of my life, and now as a business owner involved in the shooting industry I see a change

is needed when trying to attract a different demographic — which hasn't changed much in several decades.

When I go to the range, hunt, teach concealed carry classes, hit up the local gun show and attend conferences, I usually deal with the current demographic of people in this industry: mostly white males 25–65 years of age. I always wonder, "Where are the Hispanics?"

I think the main barrier to entry is the intimidation factor. What we need is to see more minorities in commercials, advertisements and the all-important online video series. First generation U.S.-born Hispanics look to online media as their main source of entertainment and information. I've seen only one online video series that accomplishes this ("NRA Freestyle") and it involves a young, minority shooter. Perhaps the same format in Spanish/English may work?

In order to involve the Hispanic population, and more specifically, the acculturated Mexican-American males, there needs to be the people and language that is associated with this population.

Roberto Macias
Mid America Training Center
O'Fallon, Ill.

Roberto, thank you for your comments — it's refreshing to hear your point of view as the industry continues its push to increase diversity. We'll present a full review of NSSF's "A Hispanic Market Study: Firearms And The Shooting Sports" report in SI's January 2016 New Business Year issue. In the meantime, it's available for NSSF members and upon request at nssf.org/research. ©

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Industry Battles Against Anti-Gun Legislation, Sentiment

By Jade Moldé

With battles on multiple fronts, industry leaders are actively responding to anti-industry legislative and economical attacks. On August 10, the Seattle City Council voted unanimously to enact a new Gun Violence Tax that will add \$25 to every gun and 5 cents on every round of ammo (2 cents on .22 and smaller calibers) sold in the city. After Seattle Mayor Ed Murray signed the measure, NSSF joined the NRA, Second Amendment Foundation (SAF) and Seattle-based retailers and gun owners in a lawsuit against the City on August 24. Announcement of the lawsuit attracted national media coverage.

"NSSF has no alternative but to be an active party in this lawsuit against the City of Seattle's attempt to interfere in the lawful commerce of firearms and ammunition on the grounds that it violates Washington State's preemption statute that blocks cities from regulating the sale of firearms on their own," said Lawrence G. Keane, NSSF senior VP and general counsel. "The Seattle ordinance is nothing but a 'poll tax' on the Second Amendment and an effort to drive Seattle's firearms retailers out of business."

Proponents of the tax say the measure will bring in \$300,000 to \$500,000 a year that would provide "broad-based public benefits for residents of Seattle related to gun violence by funding programs that promote public safety, prevent gun violence and address in part the cost of gun violence in the City." NSSF anticipates the tax will generate far less than the projected total because consumers can simply go outside the city limits to make their purchases. In turn, Seattle dealers' businesses will be impacted, as they would likely have to relocate or close their doors. This tax is due to come into effect on January 1, 2016.

The Seattle City council has a history of passing anti-gun legislation.

"Once again, anti-gun activists in Seattle have chosen to violate the Washington State Constitution and trample upon the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens," said Chris Cox, executive director of NRA's Institute for Legislative Action. "They tried to enact similar regulations back in 2009 and lost. It's a shame to see such a waste of public resources on issues the courts have already ruled to be unconstitutional."

"We've been down this path before with Seattle when we sued them and won, knocking out their attempt to ban guns in city park facilities," said Alan Gottlieb, SAF founder and executive

VP. "The city does not seem to understand that no matter how they wrap this package, it's still a gun control law and it violates Washington's long-standing preemption statute."

Research Supports Industry's Stance

In joining the lawsuit against Seattle, NSSF said the law is misguided because criminals do not purchase guns through legal means. While this is a well-known fact by many in the industry, it was incidentally backed by a recent survey conducted by the University of Chicago Crime Lab — an institution not known for its support of the Second Amendment.

"The Seattle ordinance is nothing but a 'poll tax' on the Second Amendment and an effort to drive Seattle's firearms retailers out of business."

— Larry Keane, NSSF senior VP and general counsel

In a survey of 99 inmates in a Chicago-area jail, respondents reported they had acquired the vast majority of their firearms through family, friends or on the black market. Comparatively, only two of the inmates (from an original sample size of 135 responses) claimed to have purchased a gun through legal means at a gun store. Although a small sample size, the NSSF says broader government surveys support this data — such as those conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics — which found roughly 80 percent of inmates obtained firearms from family, friends or the street.

"Bad Apple" Charges

On another front, NSSF is responding to a renewed effort by the Brady Campaign to add heavy regulations for law-abiding retailers. The Brady Campaign's "Stop Bad Apple Gun Dealers" effort is purporting "90 percent of guns used in crimes were

Continued on page 22

Smith & Wesson Donates \$1 Million To NRA-ILA

The NRA announces it has received a \$1 million gift to the NRA Institute for Legislative Action (NRA-ILA) from Smith & Wesson.

"At Smith & Wesson, we are honored to be part of an American heritage that goes back 163 years and is rooted in the fabric and the freedoms of our country. Our customers have loyally supported our products, while the NRA has loyally defended the Second Amendment. We are proud to play our part by doing all we can to support the NRA-ILA and its efforts to preserve the rights of Americans to keep and bear arms," said James Debney, Smith & Wesson CEO.

"We greatly appreciate Smith & Wesson's generosity and leadership in helping defend our Second Amendment freedoms,"

said Chris W. Cox, NRA-ILA executive director. "This gift will help us educate millions of Americans about the importance of protecting their constitutional rights now and in the future."

The NRA-ILA is responsible for the NRA's legislative, legal and political efforts. In addition, NRA-ILA educates Americans on the importance of their Second Amendment freedoms and hunting heritage.



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TriStar Arms Expands Headquarters

TriStar Arms, importer of Turkish shotguns and pistols, recently completed an expansion of its headquarters in North Kansas City, Kan.

The expansion nearly doubles the size of TriStar's original headquarters, and will add two new offices, a conference room and additional space to its existing warehouse.

"We've experienced substantial growth in both recognition and overall sales. This new space will allow us to increase the efficiency of our entire operation, and also increase the size of

our shipping department," said Ryan Bader, TriStar sales and marketing manager.

Along with the expansion comes a complete remodeling of TriStar's offices, which will include the addition of videoconference capabilities, allowing the company to connect with its distributors around the country, as well as the staff located in its Turkish factories.

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GLOCK Receives Multiple Telly Awards

GLOCK Inc. was honored for its G43 Product Release broadcast commercials and Internet video at the 36th Annual Telly Awards, held in June.

In partnership with Rogin Entertainment, GLOCK received 14 awards in five categories, including the coveted Silver Telly in the Institutional/Corporate Image in the Online Video Commercial category.

The Telly Awards honor outstanding local, regional and cable TV commercials and programs, as well as the best video and film productions, web commercials, videos and films, as judged by its esteemed panel of judges.

GLOCK's G43 video, released late in March 2015, stood out among the more than 12,000 entries received by the 650 judges.

"We are proud of the production and also the recognition from the industry professionals of the Telly Awards panel," said Josh Dorsey, GLOCK VP. "The video conveys the confidence the G43 brings to the GLOCK customer base and to the general market."

GLOCK's additional 13 Telly Awards were in the remaining four categories: Campaign — Business-to-Consumer, Videography/Cinematography, Business-to-Consumer and Promotional Branding.

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Online readers, click the "Online Extra!" logo to watch the extended cut of the G43 release video.

NSSF Opens Registration For HAVA Golf Classic

NSSF announces registration is underway for the 2nd Annual NSSF/HAVA Golf Classic to be held Jan. 17, 2016 in Las Vegas.

"HAVA is our industry's best statement of veteran support, and we at NSSF are proud to walk with the industry volunteers who quarterback this critical program to repay part of our nation's debt to the heroes to whom we owe so much," said Chris Dolnack, NSSF senior VP, CMO and HAVA director. "Hosting an industry golf outing in conjunction with the SHOT Show in order to raise money that helps wounded veterans reconnect with their families is something everyone in our industry can get behind."

"We're encouraging teams to enter from all of the NSSF-member companies, and are running a special one-free-with-three offer to solicit teams to carry their company's message of support for the disabled veterans and injured active military that HAVA serves," said HAVA Chairman Tom Taylor.

The golf classic will be held two days before the opening of the 2016 SHOT Show at Bear's Best Country Club. For more information and to register, visit www.shotshow.org/golf.



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SCTP, PITA Team Up To Promote Youth Shooting

The Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP), part of the Scholastic Shooting Sports Foundation, has announced its new partnership with the Pacific International Trapshooting Association (PITA) to promote youth shooting sports opportunities.

The two organizations jointly hosted the SCTP Western U.S. Trap Shooting Tournament at the Evergreen Sportsman's Club in Olympia, Wash., July 23–24. The tournament ran concurrently with the PITA's Youth Education Shooting (Y-E-S) Grand Pacific Championships, and teams were affiliated with either the SCTP or PITA/Y-E-S programs. The SCTP is offering over \$30,000 in team endowment funding.

The SCTP has relationships with national governing bodies for each of the shooting sports its youth shooting program promotes, including the National Skeet Shooting Association, National Sporting Clays Association, Amateur Trapshooting As-

sociation and USA Shooting. The SCTP works cooperatively with the PITA, which promotes trapshooting and sanctions tournaments in 10 western states and provinces.

"SCTP has worked diligently with the national governing bodies to be in line with them and include them in our program. Supporting these associations and having them support us is something that will help all of us grow," said Tom Wondrash, SCTP national director.

"The PITA is excited to be partnering with SCTP, and we are looking forward to the opportunities this may present," said Sue Brewer, PITA secretary.

Visit www.sssfonline.org, www.shootpita.com



Bill Hicks & Co. Announces Dealer Show

Bill Hicks & Co. announces its 21st Annual Dealer Show will be held Jan. 9–11, 2016, at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

Company officials remind dealers this will be the first opportunity in the Midwest to view new products and to meet with factory personnel before the SHOT Show in Las Vegas.

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To register to attend the show, dealers should contact their Bill Hicks & Co. sales representative or Christine Johnson at 1-800-449-5280, email: christine.johnson@billhicksco.com.

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Kahr Firearms Group Opens Pennsylvania Headquarters

Kahr Firearms Group is officially a Pennsylvania company. In August, the firearms group ceremonially cut the ribbon at the grand opening of its new headquarters in Blooming Grove Township in Pike County. Construction of the headquarters was completed in just 16 months since breaking ground in May 2014.

Attending the opening were Col. Robert DeSousa, state director for Sen. Pat Toomey; U.S. Representative Thomas Marino; Sheriff Philip Bueki, Pike County sheriff; and representatives from state offices, plus several county commissioners from Northeast Pennsylvania. In total, more than 200 people attended the event.

"As we continue to expand our business in Pennsylvania, we look forward to bringing jobs to Pike County, and also hope we can convince other firearms industry companies to join us on this 620-acre property. Our job is far from over here," said Justin Moon, Kahr Firearms Group CEO, during the opening ceremony.

The 40,000-square foot corporate headquarters is part of Kahr's Phase I of construction. The building has offices for the 20-plus employees, warehousing and shipping, and R&D engineering. Plans for Phase II and Phase III are still in the development stage. Plans also call for a factory outlet retail store, likely to open in 2016. The headquarters also houses two underground, 100-yard firing ranges. They will be used exclusively by Kahr Firearms Group for testing and development of products, and,



Kahr Firearms Group employees, led by CEO Justin Moon (fifth from left), and Pennsylvania state officials celebrate the opening of Kahr Arms' new 40,000-square-foot headquarters.

according to Kahr officials, should not disturb nearby neighbors or the wildlife that call the 620-acre complex home.

Kahr officials indicate there are no plans to close its manufacturing plants in Massachusetts or Minnesota, but beginning "sometime in 2016, some manufacturing and production will be conducted from the new Pike County location."

Visit www.kahr.com

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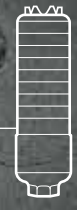


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Leupold & Stevens Expands Production

Leupold & Stevens announces it continues its commitment to American-based manufacturing and design by expanding its Beaverton, Ore.-based production capabilities.

"From the founding of our company in 1907, we have been committed to quality manufacturing and American craftsmanship," said Bruce Pettet, Leupold & Stevens president and CEO. "We are proud to continue our commitment to our American workforce, and this latest investment reinforces our belief in U.S.-made products and world-leading American optics."

In June of this year, Leupold installed a new Index R200 Milling Center, a five-axis milling machine that increases the company's ability to machine complex parts for products such as the D-EVO, DeltaPoint Pro, LCO (Leupold Carbine Optic) and the HAMR. Also recently installed is an Automated Bar Feeder, providing an additional 1,000 hours of machine time annually.

According to Leupold, this new capacity is designed to meet the strong demand for Leupold products, both domestically and abroad.

"When hunters and shooters see that Gold Ring, we want them to know what it represents: the American workforce who works hard every day to produce the highest-quality optics in the



Leupold's new Index R200 machines complex parts for several product lines, including the D-EVO, DeltaPoint Pro, LCO and HAMR.

world," Pettet said. "As part of our commitment to them, Leupold will continue to add the state-of-the-art equipment necessary to deliver on that promise."

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www.dsgarms.com
www.lwrci.com

A*B Arms has added **Sportsman's Supply Inc.** to its growing list of distributors who sell A*B Arms parts and accessories.
www.abarms.com
www.ssisports.net

Lipseys's launched an exclusive gray **GLOCK** in several models, including the G17, G19, G20, G21, G22 and G23.
www.lipseys.com
www.us.glock.com

SALES

SOG announces **Dunkin-Lewis Group** is assuming sales representation duties for four more states (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas), bringing its total sales representation to 16 states.
www.dunkinlewisinc.com
www.sogknives.com

Böker USA has added the **Carter Sales Company** and **MPI Sales** to represent its product line in the Southeastern U.S. and military retail and wholesale channels respectively.
www.bokerusa.com
www.mpisales.com

Steel Will Knives has partnered with **Evernham Sales Associates** to aid in the expansion of the Steel Will brand in 17 states.
www.evernhamsales.com
www.steelwillknives.com

PR/MARKETING

Benelli USA has selected **Blue Heron Communications** as its PR agency of record. Blue Heron will assist the **Benelli, Franchi, Stoeger, A. Uberti** and **Stoeger Airguns** brands with media relations, news, content, promotions, events and more.
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Vista Outdoor Expands Portfolio

Vista Outdoor announces the acquisition of CamelBak Products LLC and Jimmy Styks LLC.

"CamelBak helps strengthen and expand Vista Outdoor's presence in the outdoor sports and recreation market," said Mark DeYoung, Vista Outdoor's chairman and CEO. "Their highly recognizable and respected products are used by all manner of outdoor sports enthusiasts and complement every activity where Vista Outdoor's products are currently used. This acquisition will help our company provide an even broader portfolio of trusted brands for our consumers."

Under the terms of the transaction, Vista Outdoor paid \$412.5 million for CamelBak, subject to a customary working capital adjustment, utilizing cash on hand and borrowings under its existing credit facilities. Vista Outdoor expects calendar year 2015 net sales for CamelBak of approximately \$160 million.

CamelBak was founded in 1989 and is headquartered in Petaluma, Calif. The company employs approximately 300 people and will be integrated into the OutdoorProducts segment of Vista Outdoor. CamelBak will remain headquartered in Petaluma, and CEO Sally McCoy will remain with Vista Outdoor. CamelBak was previously a subsidiary company of Compass Diversified Holdings.

Jimmy Styks LLC is a leading designer and marketer of stand up paddleboards and related accessories.

"Jimmy Styks expands our portfolio into water sports with products that support activities many of our consumers enjoy, such as fishing, camping and spending their recreational time outdoors. This company and its products clearly support our mission to bring the world outside," DeYoung said.

To acquire Jimmy Styks, Vista Outdoor paid approximately \$40 million in an all-cash transaction with additional contingent consideration payable if incremental profitability growth milestones are achieved over the next three years.

Kyle Reeves and Jeremy Wilkens, who will remain with Vista Outdoor, founded Jimmy Styks in 2009 in Huntington Beach, Calif. The company will be integrated into Vista Outdoor's Outdoor Products segment.

Visit www.vistaoutdoor.com



NRA Foundation Awards College Scholarships

The NRA Foundation has awarded \$15,000 in scholarships to attendees of last summer's 2014 Youth Education Summit (Y.E.S.). The NRA Foundation provides funding for Y.E.S. and the Y.E.S. Grand Scholarship.

At the conclusion of the summit — a seven-day educational experience in Washington, D.C., for high school students — participants have the opportunity to compete in the Y.E.S. Grand Scholarship program. Over a period of nine months, students competing for the scholarship must introduce NRA programs into their communities and create a portfolio documenting the experience.

Recipients of the 2014 Y.E.S. Grand Scholarship performed a number of activities to promote firearm safety and raise money

for shooting sports programs, including hosting Eddie Eagle GunSafe classes at local elementary schools and children's programs, joining a Friends of NRA committee and establishing a 4-H shooting club.

"The Youth Education Summit has awarded more than \$460,000 in college scholarships over its 20-year history," said Kyle Weaver, NRA general operations executive director. "We are proud to assist the next generation of competitive shooters, hunters and firearms enthusiasts to pursue their dreams through higher education."

For a list of those receiving 2014 Y.E.S. Grand Scholarships, visit www.friendsofnra.org/yes.



Plano Acquires No Limit Archery

Plano Synergy Holdings announces its acquisition of No Limit Archery, a designer and manufacturer of broadheads and specialty release aids.

"No Limit Archery is an exciting company that shares the Plano Synergy commitment to manufacture the very best products that offer consumers innovative technologies and reliable performance," said Tom Hurt, Plano Synergy president and CEO.

"I can't imagine a better fit than with Plano Synergy. Our

innovation and commitment to quality are a perfect match, and it's exciting to think about what the future now holds for No Limit Archery," said Dale Perry, No Limit Archery CEO.

Plano Synergy will relocate No Limit Archery's administrative and distribution functions to its Clearwater, Fla., operation.

Visit www.planosynergy.com



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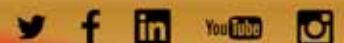
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SPS-R shown on Walther® PPG

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Anti-Gun Legislation

Continued from page 10

supplied by just 5 percent of dealers.” Larry Keane responded through the NSSF blog by saying the figure is taken from a 15-year-old ATF report, “Commerce in Firearms in the United States, February 2000” and the Brady Campaign has “knowingly misinterpreted” this data.

According to Keane, there are several factors the Brady Campaign is refusing to acknowledge. For instance, if a gun is traced back to a retailer, it doesn’t indicate there was any illegal activity on behalf of the retailer. The traced gun may have been sold to an eligible buyer, later stolen and then re-sold on the street before being used in a crime. Successful law-abiding dealers or those that have high levels of crime nearby (such as residential burglary) would have more guns traced back to their stores because 1) successful dealers have

higher volumes of sales to eligible buyers and 2) high rates of crime mean the higher share of the retailer’s customers will have their guns stolen.

“There is absolutely nothing in the Brady Campaign data — or in any other data — to indicate that anything other than high sales volumes and higher local gun theft rates completely account for the higher numbers of crime guns traced back to those FFLs that Brady arbitrarily labeled as ‘bad apple’ dealers,” Keane said.

Keane noted in Fiscal Year 2014, ATF revoked the licenses of just 0.71 percent of dealers — which shows the overwhelming majority of retailers are law-abiding business owners.

Visit www.nssfblog.com

Colonial Shooting Partners With Gunsite

Colonial Shooting Academy in Richmond, Va., and Gunsite Academy have announced an exclusive partnership to bring Gunsite’s classes to Virginia’s capital.

“We are proud to add Gunsite’s world-class firearms training course to what we believe is the best indoor range in the country,” said Peyton Lacy, Colonial Shooting Academy marketing manager. “Anyone who is serious about firearms training dreams of attending a Gunsite class, and now we are able to bring Gunsite 2,000 miles closer to shooters on the East Coast.”

The collaboration brings Gunsite classes, like the popular 250 Defensive

Pistol course, to Colonial Shooting Academy’s indoor tactical range and indoor shoot house. The first class was offered in September.

“I am proud to bring the Gunsite experience to the East Coast at Colonial Shooting Academy,” said Buz Mills, Gunsite owner. “There is certainly an advantage to being able to train rain or shine, and the facilities at Colonial Shooting Academy are the best I’ve seen on the East Coast. I’m going to enjoy spending time with new students in Richmond, and I’m sure some of our regular Gunsite students will be dropping by, as well.”

Visit www.colonialshooting.com/rva/gunsite



Gunsite is bringing its firearms training classes to the East Coast through an exclusive partnership with Colonial Shooting Academy.

NSSF Renews Industry Day Sponsorship

NSSF announces it has renewed its title sponsorship of Industry Day at the Range through 2019.

"Without a doubt, Industry Day at the Range is an invaluable component of SHOT Show and one that's especially important to all of us here at NSSF," said Chris Dolnick, NSSF senior VP and CMO. "Our extended commitment to this event is an essential element of our mission to promote, protect and preserve hunting and the shooting sports."

Held the day before the opening of SHOT Show, the event provides members of the press and retail, wholesale and law enforcement purchasing agents the opportunity for hands-on testing of firearms, ammunition and related accessories being introduced to the consumer market during SHOT Show. The 2016 event will be held Jan. 18.

Thanks to the NSSF, Industry Day has grown into the premier event in the shooting and hunting industry. We are proud and excited to have them on board as our long-term title sponsor as we continue to expand this fantastic event," said Cathy Williams, Industry Day at the Range co-owner.

STI Sponsors Media Lunch

STI International announces it has signed on as the exclusive Media Lunch Sponsor of Industry Day at the Range.

"STI International is pleased to be able to help support Industry Day at the Range," said Jens Krogh, STI director of sales and marketing. "We are looking forward to meeting with media members and giving them the opportunity to test our line of handguns on the range during the event."

All registered media will receive a lunch ticket provided by STI International.

"The launch of STI International's new products and many other products at Industry Day continue to show the value of this event throughout the outdoor, hunting and shooting industry. We are fortunate to have them on board and look forward to growing our partnership," Williams said.

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INDUSTRY NEWSMAKERS

ATAC LLC

Names President

Mark Kresser has been named president of Advanced Tactical Armament Concepts LLC (ATAC), the parent company of HPR Ammunition. He will also assume leadership of HPR Ammunition as its president. Kresser has worked with many of the firearms industry's leading manufacturers over the years.



M. Kresser

"Mark has proven time and time again a unique ability for product innovation, marketing and branding, as well as exhibiting a deft hand at developing profitable multi-level partnerships," said Jim Antich, ATAC founder.

LaserMax

Hires Director

Russell Datson IV is the new director of retail sales at LaserMax. He will provide leadership in commercial product sales and manage LaserMax's network of independent representatives. Datson will also identify and cultivate new sales opportunities and grow existing retail business. He has held several sales positions in the past 17 years and most recently served as director of sales for Liberty Ammunition. Datson holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Ohio University.



R. Datson

Dynamic Research Technologies

Names VP

Dynamic Research Technologies (DRT) announces the hiring of Mike Shovel as VP of sales and marketing. Shovel brings 23 years of ammunition industry expertise to DRT, including extensive experience in product development, public relations, sales and marketing.

Outtech Inc.

Announces Appointments

Bert Moore rejoins Outtech Inc. as a member of its Outdoor Division. Moore has over 20 years of experience in the outdoor industry including four with Outtech as regional manager. He had also worked for Beretta, Mossy Oak and Tecomate. Moore is a graduate of the University of Alabama.

Scott Roduner is also joining Outtech as western field staff manager. In his new position, Roduner will coordinate sales training and promotion events for Outtech Pro Staffers in the Western U.S. He will also represent Outtech in four Western Scheels locations.

Cannon Safe Inc.

Names Brand Sales Manager

Gregory Gondek joins Cannon Safe Inc. as brand sales manager. He will lead the company's sales team and manage the promotion and organization of policies and practices to drive up sales of gun-safe and security-safe products.

Gondek has more than 15 years of progressive experience in sales, business development, marketing and consulting management. His most recent position was at MAX USA Corporation. He had also been a security police officer in the U.S. Air Force. Gondek has an MBA from Pennsylvania State University.

Sport Manufacturing Group (SMG)

Appoints Sales Lead

Tom Slaughter is the new sales and business development lead at SMG. His experience in the past 11 years as business development manager, program manager, federal law enforcement officer and U.S. Coast Guard petty officer has allowed him to cultivate relationships with retailers, manufacturers, the Federal Government, military and other contractors.

United Sporting Companies

Announces Promotion

Will Kincaid has been promoted to national account manager for United Sporting Companies (USC). He has been with Ellett Brothers, a division of USC, for over five years managing key accounts and large format stores. Kincaid has extensive experience in the hunting and shooting sports field.



W. Kincaid

Safariland

Hires Manager

Kelsey Reddoch has been hired as brand marketing manager for Safariland. Among Reddoch's duties is to be the media contact for product samples and information. She takes over Chastine Gabiola who now handles the internal communications needs of The Safariland Group. ©

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Selling “Slim-Nine” Handguns

In a product-crowded market, tailoring gun choice to individual needs can result in more sales. When it comes to “slim-nines” — slim-line subcompact pistols with single-stack magazines, and chambered in 9mm — they’re among our hottest sellers today in the defensive handgun market. For proof, look no further than the great market clamor from earlier this year created by the release of the GLOCK 43. The same holds true for the instant and continuing best-seller status of the M&P SHIELD series Smith & Wesson introduced in 2012.

The market is now crowded with many choices from a variety of manufacturers, enough to result in consumer confusion. Someone saying, “I don’t know which one to choose” tends to translate to “I’m not going to buy anything yet.” By analyzing the individual customer’s specific needs, the choice of the ideal pistol for the aforementioned customer can be cleared up. Instead of “I don’t know which one to choose,” we have “I’ll buy that one ... now.” Let’s look at some examples.

The pistols under discussion are small enough to fit in a side trouser pocket, and flat enough to conceal discreetly and comfortably in this location. Bear in mind some of your customers will be left handed, and there will also be many customers buying the small 9mm to use as a second, or “backup,” handgun. Many of these buyers want to have a gun available for either hand in case one arm is injured — so if they’re normally wearing their primary sidearm on the right, the pocket they’ll choose for the backup gun will be on the left. In either case, this presents the left side of the pistol to the outside.

What often happens now is if the wearer’s left side bumps a doorway, car door or anything else, it can release the magazine.



Popular “slim-line” semiautos, such as the Beretta Nano (left) and GLOCK 43, have attracted a substantial amount of interest from concealed-carry customers.

It will drop down just enough so after the first shot, it can’t cycle another cartridge into the chamber, thus turning a seven- or eight-shot handgun into a single shot.

For either of those customers, the lefty *or* the “righty” who will be carrying in a left-side pocket, show them the little Walther PPS. Its magazine release takes the form of a double paddle running across the bottom portion of the triggerguard on both sides. It’s activated to dump the mag by a downward press of either trigger finger or thumb. Problem solved!

A sales (and safety!) tip: *Any* handgun carried in a pocket should ride in a pocket holster — make sure you have a selection on hand. A good pocket holster will cover the triggerguard, for obvious safety reasons. It will also keep the gun oriented in a proper position for quick access, instead of shifting around in the pocket and ending butt-upward in an awkward-to-reach, and therefore dangerous, position.

Thumb Safety: Yes or No?

As an FFL dealer, you’re already familiar with two schools of thought on manual safety levers for defensive pistols. One faction likes them, even demands them: They see it as one more “safety net” against an unintended discharge. They may also be familiar with the fact a number of criminal attempts to “kill the good guy with the good guy’s own gun” have been thwarted because the criminal who gained control of the pistol did not know how to off-safe it. The other faction fears they will forget to off-safe during an emergency — or it will take too long to do so — preferring a “point and shoot” pistol instead.



When it comes to safeties on defensive handguns, you can tailor the sale to accommodate your customer’s needs — with Springfield Armory’s EMP (left) and S&W’s SHIELD providing options on both sides of the spectrum.

You can tailor your sale to either customer’s preference. S&W’s SHIELD originally came with a small, right hand-only safety lever on the frame. It’s still available for those who prefer it. Not long ago, due to customer demand, S&W introduced a variation of the SHIELD without a manual safety, and you can order it either way. Frankly, a number of competent shooters had already made the choice to buy a SHIELD and simply carry it with the safety lever down in the “fire” position. The Ruger LC9 also comes with a thumb safety.

If your prospective buyer is comfortable with cocked and locked carry, he or she might be an ideal candidate for a single-action “slim-nine.” The little SIG SAUER P938 fits this profile. A SIG rep told me recently the company was pleasantly surprised by how many of these 9mms they’ve sold to police officers as backup guns, including officers who don’t normally carry larger 1911s in their duty holsters. Another in this category is the excellent Springfield Armory EMP (Enhanced Micro Pistol).

The diminutive Springfield XD-S has a grip safety, as do some of the smallest 1911s. For some, it’s added security: Holstering or drawing with their thumb at the rear of the slide keeps the grip safety “on,” preventing unintended discharge if something interdicts the trigger. For those who don’t like grip safeties, well, there are plenty of handguns that don’t have them.

The Revolver Switch

A great number of those who buy "slim-nine" semiautomatics are switching from small-frame, double-action revolvers. They appreciate the greater "shootability" of the subcompact 9mm auto, but worry about premature or unintended discharges with a gun that has a shorter and lighter trigger pull than what they've become used to. The SIG P290R is double-action only (DAO). So are the Beretta Nano, Kel-Tec PF9 and Ruger LC9. All the Kahr pistols, including the smallest, are DAO and famous for smooth trigger pulls.

Almost every customer objection to one "slim-nine" can be answered by showing him or her a different one.

Some handgun customers prefer revolvers for defense because at close distances, the revolver's muzzle can be pressed against the opponent's body and will fire every shot — while many semiautomatics will go out of battery and fail to discharge even the first shot when the muzzle is at hard press contact with the target. Very few small semiautomatics exist which can fire repeatedly at press contact, but some do: the Springfield XD-S, for example, and the Beretta Nano and SIG P290R. In both cases, it's because their recoil spring guide rod extends far enough forward to create "standoff effect" which prevents the slide from going out of battery.

Stopping Power Discussion

The perception of the 9mm cartridge as underpowered for defensive purposes lasted through well into the 2000s for many consumers. If a customer wants to buy a gun in this size, but isn't confident in 9mm, you can offer him or her something in the same size package in "a caliber with a '4' in it." The SHIELD is available in .40 S&W (and is surprisingly soft in recoil for this round in such a light platform), and so are some subcompact Kahrs. The Springfield Armory XD-S is also available in .45 ACP and the .45-caliber GLOCK 36 is more or less in this size category, too.

The bottom line? Almost every customer objection to one "slim-nine" can be answered by showing him or her a different one. Answer the objections, satisfy the need and make the sale. ©



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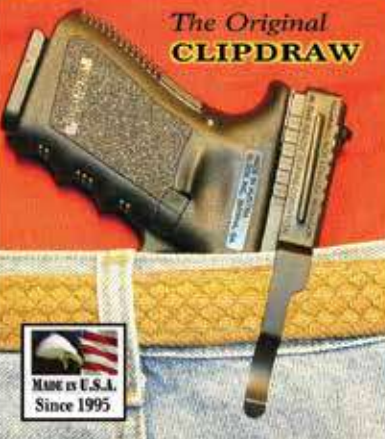




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Loyalty Isn't For Sale: It's Earned

As the saying goes, “employees don’t leave their job, they leave their manager.” You might beg to differ when it comes to your own employees, but think back to every job *you* left. What or *who* was the deciding factor?

Because loyalty isn’t something you can buy — though some managers make an attempt to — it’s still often treated like a luxury that can’t be afforded. But for managers who understand what it takes to run a thriving team, earning loyalty is something they can’t do without.

Last month in this column, we discussed how the success of your business equally depends on the happiness of your customers and employees, who we nicknamed “the other customer.” We explored the importance of emotionally and mentally engaging your staff in the way that you train, treat, and reward them — the goal being to encourage employee loyalty, because, after all, your profits are tied to their performance.

To better understand how business owners earn loyalty from their staff, I reached out to a few online forums playing host to gun enthusiasts across the country. I heard from a mix of managers, retail employees and retired law enforcement. They responded with their experiences in the workplace — both the good and the bad. As I read their stories, I noticed three repeating factors that played a role in fostering loyalty: employers who cared about their employees as people, who properly trained their staff and who recognized and rewarded good work.

Promote Loyalty From The Top

Richard, a dedicated manager who successfully operates a TripAdvisor top-10 ranked hotel and restaurant in Grand Junction, Colo., earned the loyalty of his 30-person staff with his “in the trenches” style of leadership. Richard is willing to lend a hand bussing tables, making beds and manning the front desk when necessary to show his staff he’s invested in their success.

Richard also allowed a few financially strapped staff members to live in the hotel temporarily until they could find permanent housing, setting them up with a tab and deducting small payments from their paychecks. When it’s been a particularly hard day, Richard treats the team to \$75 worth of pizza — “A small price to pay to show people you care,” he says. “If you’re talking about



three or four people in a gun store, one large pizza is a lot of good will.” His gesture is more valuable than the cost of the pizza.

Because Richard understands “good employees are worth their weight in gold,” he makes substantial investments into their training and personal lives, and has won their loyalty as a result.

Roger, who works for a 50-year-old, family-owned company of over 2,000 employees in Mississippi, credits his loyalty to the owner’s leadership style — which he calls “manage by walking.” Every month, the owner strolls the floors of the building, visiting with Roger and his co-workers. “With over 2,000 employees, he’ll still remember your kid’s names and ask about them and how they’re doing,” Roger marvels. “He never talks about business during these walks; saving that for specific business visits.”

In 50 years, the owner has never had a lay-off and is cautious when it comes to filling open positions, considering how that person will fit in with his team. Roger says, “That tends to mean we’re slightly understaffed, but everyone knows once you’re hired, you have a job for life if you so choose.”

Relationships Are Key

Proud Texan, Donald, remembers the day a local gun store lost his business. He was about to buy a revolver when a Ruger expert showing him the firearm placed it back in the case mid-sale while Donald had turned away momentarily. Surprised, Donald asked the man, “Are we through here?” The unperceptive salesman replied, “I guess so,” losing himself the sale. Donald promptly left the store and purchased the same revolver elsewhere.

In contrast, Donald’s relationship with Steve, a salesman at his local pawnshop, is drastically different. Steve knows Donald by name, has memorized which firearms he prefers, and occasionally calls when a gun arrives that might interest Donald. If Steve is out to lunch, Donald waits until he returns. Steve is the only person he’ll do business with at the shop. That’s because he’s willing to pay for Steve’s level of customer service and salesmanship. He’s

earned both Donald’s business and his loyalty, in the process.

Richard, Roger, and Donald have been on both ends of the counter. They know what it means to be loyal to an employer and also what it means to earn the loyalty of an employee. If you’re unsure where your employees stand, it might be helpful to start a conversation, maybe over a slice of pizza, your treat. Although you can’t buy loyalty, your employees can tell when you’re genuinely invested in them. Join the discussion about employee loyalty, by emailing editor@shootingindustry.com.

Editor’s Note: Taylor Smithfield is in the midst of a four-part series on customer retention, employee loyalty and related topics. If you have a comment on how this plays out in your store, send us an email.

NSSF Career Center Provides Connections

The NSSF has revamped their job posting service to debut their new NSSF Career Center, which connects you to a network of potential employees. Located at www.jobs.nssf.org, the Career Center provides unparalleled exposure to professionals in the firearms industry for both NSSF members and non-members.

Join with an employer account and easily post jobs and search for employees. When you pay for a job listing, you can search the database and receive notifications when a résumé meets your criteria. Job seekers can easily upload their résumés, as well.

"We're excited to launch this new platform to the benefit of both employers and job seekers alike," said Deb Kenney, NSSF VP of human resources and administration. "No other job board out there is dedicated solely to fulfilling the hiring needs of the firearms industry, and we think our new Career Center will not only fill that gap, but provide a much-needed avenue for matching highly qualified industry professionals with the specialized jobs that require their skills."

Visit jobs.nssf.org



Lipseys Expands Flat Dark Earth Line G42

Lipseys has expanded their 33-model Flat Dark Earth pistol line, adding their Exclusive GLOCK 42 in the new color



scheme. Molded with the FDE color at the time of manufacture (as opposed to an aftermarket coating), the G42 is both durable and resistant to chipping.

"The FDE line of GLOCKS have firmly entrenched themselves as a mainstream item," says Jason Cloessner, Lipsey's product development manager, who has been working with GLOCK for several months on the FDE model. "The G42 was a natural follow-up to what has become one of our most in-demand exclusive offerings."

Visit www.lipseys.com

Blue Book, 3 Circle Announce Partnership

Blue Book Publications, publisher of *Blue Book of Gun Values* reference data, and 3 Circle Software, creator of Gun StoreMaster software for FFL retailers, announce a partnership to deliver information and productivity tools for dealers. Integrating Blue Book's firearm information with Gun StoreMaster MarketView, dealers will now have access to a system that can quickly provide the information needed to better buy and sell firearms.

Gun StoreMaster's software mitigates the risk of losing or misinterpreting vital customer information and helps owners to quickly acclimate new hires and increase their productivity. In addition, the software provides an electronic eSAFE Bound Book and built-in integration with QuickBooks POS.

"FFL dealers often need to support buying and selling decisions by research-

ing the firearm marketplace. Our system speeds up this process by connecting to various information sources in one easy-to-use place," said Steve Harris, 3 Circle Software CEO.

"We expect to leverage our unique information in additional creative ways with Gun StoreMaster MarketView, to further benefit FFL dealers," said Adam Burt, Blue Book president.

Planned additions to the Gun StoreMaster family include the Gun StoreMaster Fast4473 and the Gun StoreMaster MarketView services which present a more vivid picture of the firearms distribution marketplace.

Visit www.bluebookofgunvalues.com, www.3circlesoft.com



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Gearing Up For Fall Turkey Season

Going after gobblers is a trending shooting pastime among women. Women hunters are drawn to the interactive nature of turkey hunting and a chance to use a variety of skills to bag a bird. Since turkeys have a reputation for being crafty prey and many states have both fall and spring turkey seasons, hunters need a wide variety of equipment to have a successful day in the field. Luckily, manufacturers have taken note of women hunters' enthusiasm for going after turkeys — resulting in many specialized products designed for women are now on the market.

Turkey Guns

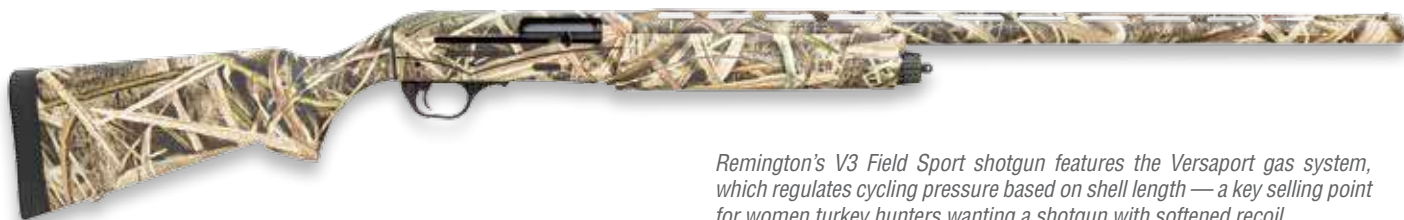
Remington's V3 Field Sport autoloader shotguns are just the ticket for turkey hunting. The line features Remington's Versaport gas system, which cycles lightweight loads — as well as heavier turkey loads — without a hitch. Women will really appreciate the Versaport system because it also reduces felt recoil. The 12-gauge V3 weighs in at 7.25 pounds and has another feature ladies will love: an adjustable length of pull system to create a custom fit. The V3 is available in walnut, synthetic black and Mossy Oak Blades Camo.

Mossberg's 835 Ulti-Mag 12-gauge pump-action shotgun in either a 20-inch vent-rib barrel or 24-inch vent-rib, ported barrel offers versatility as hunters can use it for either turkey or waterfowl. Chambered in 3.5-inch, it comes with an X-Factor ported turkey choke tube. Weighing in at about 7.5 pounds, the Ulti-Mag sports an adjustable fiber optic sight and is available in Mossy Oak Obsession or Break-up Infinity.

Browning recently came out with a special National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) version of their popular Silver series of autoloaders. Sporting Mossy Oak Break-up Country camo, the Silver NWTF has a rifle-style HiViz 4-1 fiber optic sight and a 24-inch barrel that will shoot up to 3.5-inch shells. The length of pull is 14.25 inches, weight is 7.4 pounds and it has a capacity of four shells. This shotgun uses Browning's Invector-Plus choke tube system including Full Strut tube.

Weatherby also recently added new turkey guns to their line up with the Weatherby SA-459 Turkey semiauto and the PA-08 Turkey pump action. The SA-459 is fully dipped in Realtree Xtra Green camo and has a rubberized pistol grip. The 12-gauge version weighs 6.75 pounds, while the 20-gauge weighs 6.25 pounds. Both 12- and 20-gauge will shoot up to a 3-inch shell and their capacity is 5+1. It comes with an extended XF fluted choke tube, and other features include a fiber optic front sight and removable Picatinny receiver mount.

Winchester's most current turkey gun is the SX3 Long Beard 12-gauge semiauto finished in Realtree Xtra Green camo. Women will appreciate the slimmer stock, grip and forearm dimensions for a lighter and more controlled feel. Other woman-friendly features include spacers to allow for an adjustable length of pull, drop and cast and a Pachmayr Decelerator pad that absorbs recoil. The self-adjusting Active Valve gas system further reduces felt recoil. The SX3 has a 24-inch barrel, weighs 7.8 pounds, will shoot up to 3.25-inch shells and has a magazine capacity of four.



Remington's V3 Field Sport shotgun features the Versaport gas system, which regulates cycling pressure based on shell length — a key selling point for women turkey hunters wanting a shotgun with softened recoil.

Manufacturers Commit To Women-Specific Calls And Clothing

Getting that gobbler to come in close is paramount to a successful turkey hunt, and women can now find turkey calls sized for small-statured people.

FOXPRO's Crooked Spur line of turkey calls is ergonomically designed and easy to use. The Pink Fang comes in hot pink and is best suited to hunters with a narrow mouth palate. Tom Teasers also offers a variety of handmade turkey calls in a small-frame format. There are several options, so women can have the right call for the occasion. Flambeau Outdoors MAD Pink Panther ladies turkey call was also designed with smaller palates in mind. Women will appreciate its small frame, light stretch and the fact that it can be trimmed for a custom fit.

Turkeys are renowned for their keen eyesight and being able to sense hunters in the field, so a good quality camo with scent-blocking technology is a must. Under Armour's line of camo for women has a wide variety of clothing for almost every situation. Their Scent Control Hunting gloves could prove to be a very pop-

ular item. Not only do these gloves trap scents and whisk away moisture, they also have a silicone-plated palm for added grip and touch screen compatible fingertips.

The Prós line of technical hunting gear also offers women many options. The clothing was designed by women for women and has numerous features to make it some of the best hunting gear out there. Prós' camo base layers, pants jackets and shirts are all designed with a female hunter's comfort in mind and with practical features like quiet fleece to ensure a successful day in the field. Accessories like gaiters, gloves, hats and backpacks round out the line.



New from Flambeau Outdoors, the MAD Pink Panther diaphragm turkey call is designed for women.

Low Recoil Is Key

Women who are sensitive to recoil will want to invest in low-recoil turkey loads. Hevi-Shot's Magnum Blend Reduced Recoil is available in 12- and 20-gauge and uses a combination of slower velocities and lighter payloads to manage recoil. Federal's Mag-Shok HEAVYWEIGHT (LR) is another lower recoil ammo option available in 12- and 20-gauge. These 2.75-inch shells are purported to have 47 percent less recoil than 3-inch shells, yet still deliver gobble-getting power.

More women taking up hunting turkey has really made manufacturers sit up and take notice. They are more than ever committed to welcoming women to the shooting sports and the current product offerings are reflecting their efforts. Even if you don't have the room to stock all of these items, be sure to let women know they are out there and you can special order anything a female hunter needs. As more women take to the field, the number of products available to them will increase, and they will remember who provided them with the products they need as well as excellent customer service.



Federal's Mag-Shok HEAVYWEIGHT turkey load delivers 1,100 fps, with over 40 percent less recoil than other 2.75-inch loads.

From Muddy To Foxy

Legacy Sports International recently announced their Muddy Girl camo has transitioned to Foxy Woods camo by Thunder Mountain Camo. The new Foxy Woods camo is available on the Howa line of bolt-action rifles and the Escort line of semiauto shotguns. Foxy Woods camo pattern combines realistic oak trees, leaves and acorns as well as a hot pink shade to make a unique pattern. ©

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Why Would You Ever Leave?

If you're looking to hear about the daring heroics of a "Shawshank Redemption"-style prison break, I can tell you one place where you wouldn't need an elaborate escape plan: Norway's famous Bastoy Prison, which CCN once described as the "world's nicest prison." Situated on a picturesque one-square-mile island, this jail has more luxurious features than actual resorts. For one thing, Bastoy has no walls or fences — even prison cells are considered "inhumane" here, with inmates having keys to their own rooms. Instead, they're lavished with access to tennis courts, beaches, a sauna ... even an organic farm. Not bad, eh?

There's no problem of overcrowding here, as the island houses approximately 115 inmates. And by the way, inmates can dress like everyday citizens, which is all part of Norway's "pleasant-prison" philosophy. We're not sure why, but escape attempts are pretty rare here.

For one "guest" though, these accommodations just weren't enough. An inmate who was serving time for drug and sex charges recently escaped the island with nothing more than a surfboard and a plastic shovel, making the roughly two-mile trek from the prison to mainland Norway in the middle of the night. I guess he couldn't handle the fresh air and acres of farmland to roam in. The man hasn't been caught yet, but if he does, he can look forward to being transferred to a high-security prison. In Norway, we'd have to wonder what that looks like — maybe only a hot tub and dial-up Internet access?

With no sign of the escapee, he's violated one of Governor Arne Kvernvik Nilsen's rules: The governor meets with each new inmate and asks if they should successfully escape, to call him via



Illustration by Nick Petrosino

phone so he knows they're safe and won't have to send the Coast Guard looking for them. Sounds like a nice guy, right? For all we know, the escapee may be enjoying a tropical-infused drink on one of Norway's other pristine beaches.

She Delayed The Inevitable

Unlike the successful escape attempt in this month's lead story, we recently stumbled upon one with slightly more intrigue that ended quite differently. Erlynn Sanchez-Edwards was arrested four weeks after she jumped from the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge into the water of the bay below. She was trying to evade police officers as they were attempting to help her after she was involved in a collision on the bridge. Why would she want to take the 70-foot plunge into the icy bay, you ask? Well, the fact she was under the influence and driving a stolen car from Los Angeles may have something to do with it.

Officers knew Sanchez-Edwards had likely survived her escape attempt after witnesses saw a woman emerge from the water and a truck driver reported picking up a woman in wet clothing soon after. Following an anonymous tip, Sanchez-Edwards was arrested in Oakland on suspicion of car theft, receipt of a stolen ve-

hicle, hit-and-run causing injury, resisting arrest and driving under the influence. We hope she enjoyed her extra four weeks of freedom, because she won't be receiving the same plush benefits as her counterparts in Bastoy Prison.

I Told You Guys That Stuff Is Dangerous

I hate asparagus. So, sue me, okay? Yeah, yeah, I've heard all that stuff about "Just try it with this creamy Alfredo sauce," and "Cover it with bacon, splash on some salsa, and wow!" No. Just *no*.

Anytime you have to cover up something nasty with something tasty just to make it edible, count me out. Apparently I'm not alone, and there are other people who even see it as a threat.

Police calls in rural northeastern Germany are pretty rare, and the kind of calls they get are like, reports of loose geese, or a driver who stopped for a nice lager after work driving his tractor off the cow path into a ditch. So, you can imagine how the

local cops reacted when they got a panicky call reporting a criminal-looking mob of about 15 people advancing menacingly down a road armed with knives and sticks.

Six police cruisers screamed to the scene — six, pretty much being "everybody available." And there was the mob! And they had threatening-looking things in their hands! But the brave officers charged in and challenged them.

Those suspicious weapons? Big juicy stalks of white asparagus. White asparagus is a seasonal delicacy, with most of the crop going to fancy restaurants. The "mob" was a bunch of asparagus harvesters, who take great care not to bruise the expensive stalks. Well, I guess if you get one big enough you could whack somebody with it, and the ends *are* kinda pointy ... ☹

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THE NEXT GENERATION



YSSA Pinpoints Youth Programs For Future Growth

By Steve Miller

Hardly a week goes by without a company within the shooting sports industry receiving another request from a youth program leader for a donation of either money or products to support their group. Should the company provide support?

We all recognize the importance of introducing youth to the pleasures and responsibilities of the shooting sports, but finding the right programs to endorse can be a difficult and time-consuming process. Where can a company go to receive guidance in selecting which youth programs to support to ensure their donations will have the greatest impact on recruiting and retaining youth in the shooting sports?

As a service to the industry, the Youth Shooting Sports Alliance (YSSA) identifies youth shooting sports programs with the greatest return on investment and prioritizes them based on criteria such as program quality, potential for growth and participation levels.

Each year, YSSA conducts a National Assessment of Youth Shooting Sports Program Needs to identify limitations to program growth because of the lack of shooting sports equipment and supplies. Invitations to participate in the assessment are sent to National 4-H Shooting Sports state coordinators, Boy Scout Councils and a host of other independent youth programs. The YSSA reviews proposals and identifies the priority programs that best contribute to the future market goals of the industry.

Scouting teaches youth the safe, responsible use of firearms, airguns and BB guns in carefully managed and supervised programs. Archery, Rifle and Shotgun Shooting merit badges have all grown in popularity over the last decade.



YSSA recognizes the National 4-H Shooting Sports Program as a leading organization in introducing youth to the shooting sports. Each year, 4-H teaches a shooting sport to over 300,000 kids.

By working with some of the most respected manufacturers in the industry, YSSA has established a sound foundation in providing product support for priority youth shooting sports programs nationwide. In 2014, the YSSA played a significant role in assisting programs to introduce 72,000 youth to the shooting sports.

The YSSA Shooting Sports Equipment Loan Program continues to be a popular resource of firearms, archery equipment and BB guns available for use by youth shooting sports programs. This program is a "loan" program, not a "rental" program. The cost of shipping loaned firearms, BB guns and archery equipment to groups is paid by YSSA. The user youth programs are responsible for the cost of returning the loaned equipment.

The inventory of firearms available for loan currently includes over 600 rifles, shotguns and pistols, hundreds of Daisy BB guns and a large amount of archery equipment. The majority of this equipment was either donated or offered for purchase to the YSSA at significant price concessions.

The YSSA Donated Sporting Goods Program provides an opportunity for manufacturers, distributors and sportsmen and women to donate their old guns and other sporting goods to help YSSA build the next generation of shooters. Donations are, in turn, sold on GunBroker.com.

At the close of 2014, these auctions generated over \$500,000, which was used to purchase equipment and supplies to support youth shooting sports programs nationwide.

The YSSA welcomes partnerships with companies and individuals who share their passion for recruiting and retaining kids in the shooting sports. For more information, contact Steve Miller, YSSA executive director at (240) 347-4351 or by email at proud2hunt@aol.com.

Visit www.youthshootingssa.com

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BEE SWAX AND APPLE SAUCE



By Jade Moldé

When it comes to putting on the Ritz, few do it better than those in our industry “family” who come in droves to champion the shooting sports. This year, over 300 big cheeses, flappers, hard-boiled cats — even a few torpedoes — turned up at the 2015 edition of the Shooting Industry Masters. This 13th annual industry-only event embraced camaraderie, friendly competition and support for the future of the shooting sports.

Owned and operated by FMG Publications, the Shooting Industry Masters took place July 24–25 at the Claythorne Lodge in Columbus, Kan. Masters attendees enjoyed two days full of shooting Centerfire, Rimfire, Sporting Clays and Team Tactics events, while making the rounds on 17 side matches and reliving the best of the Roaring Twenties. The focus of this year’s match was on team building — which meant teams competed as a unit for their cumulative scores on the Centerfire, Rimfire, Sporting Clays and Team Tactics events and individual scores were not recorded.



Over 300 industry members — from presidents and CEOs to product managers and engineers — converged on the Claythorne Lodge to take part in two days of shooting and supporting First Shots and USA Shooting.

"The enthusiasm streaming from every participant as they experienced two days' worth of team building, shooting relays and side match capers reminded us again how the people behind the brands really are the glue of the entire industry," said Randy Molde, Masters chairman and FMG VP of business development.

Rubes For The Shooting Sports

The "Claythorne Caper" reeled in an impressive haul of \$71,650 in support of the shooting sports. This year's event generated \$57,600 for NSSF's First Shots program through raffle ticket sales, side match participation and several special custom gun auctions hosted on GunBroker.com. With this year's total, the Masters has now raised \$338,600 for First Shots since 2008.

"After 13 years and as many climate variations, we've discovered Shooting Industry Masters participants must be super-human," Molde said. "It's the only thing that explains their disregard of elements in favor of an overwhelming desire to shoot an unprecedented number of events and still have strength to invest in thousands of dollars worth of raffle tickets, all in support of First Shots."

"FMG's Shooting Industry Masters continues to be the most exciting industry-wide participatory competitive event," said Steve Sanetti, NSSF president and CEO. "They always find ways to outdo themselves, and the Masters just keeps getting better! Best of all is their completely unselfish devotion to NSSF's First Shots program, which has introduced many thousands of new participants to the shooting sports during the last decade."

Sixty-four sponsors signed on to help produce the 2015 Shooting Industry Masters. Fifty-three industry manufacturers and supporters contributed products for 55 raffle prize packages, which also raised money for the shooting sports.

In addition to supporting First Shots, the Masters raises money for the USA Shooting Team. This year, \$14,050 was raised through auctions on GunBroker.com and six live auctions that took place during the Masters Awards Banquet — bringing the Masters' lifetime contributions in support of USA Shooting to \$75,000.

"FMG's Shooting Industry Masters continues to be the most exciting industry-wide participatory competitive event."

— Steve Sanetti, NSSF president and CEO

"As America's shooting team, every dollar counts toward achieving our mission and we're proud to know we have a team of people standing behind us in pursuit of our goals," said Robert Weekes, USA Shooting chief marketing officer.

A record \$24,212 was raised through several one-of-a-kind Masters custom gun auctions hosted on GunBroker.com.

"You shouldn't be allowed to have so much fun while raising money, but we greatly enjoy working with everyone on this auction," said Don Hall, GunBroker.com COO. "Congratulations and thanks for the great job FMG does on this shoot in support of First Shots and USA Shooting."

Masters "Chopper Squads" competed in four main events: Centerfire, Rimfire, Sporting Clays and Team Tactics. New for this year, only the top team in each event was recognized at the Masters' Saturday night Awards Banquet.



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Putting On The Ritz

Since 2012, the Masters has focused on a theme for the two-day match and festivities. Attendees have embraced the fun, celebrating the '50s, Old West and pirates in recent years. This year, fedoras, zoot suits and flapper outfits were out in full force at the Masters Big Shot Ball held at the Downstream Casino Resort in Quapaw, Okla. The Big Shot Ball featured a costume contest to recognize the Dapper Chaps, Flapper Dames and best-dressed couple, with the winners being chosen by the crowd's applause.

Joel Hanson of Team DeadRinger, and Rick Lesser of Team Sharps Rifle were awarded "Dapper Chap" for arriving at the Ball as a "copper" and tommy gun-wielding mobster respectively. The two "Flapper Dames" were XS Sights' Tanya Gorin and Winchester Ammunition's Laci Warden. The best-dressed couple turned out to be the best-dressed family, with Rob Pincus from I.C.E. Training winning the award with his wife and their baby daughter.

This year's Spirit Award went to very deserving winners: XS Sights. The company has embodied the Spirit of the Masters the last few years, and this year, XS arrived at the Claythorne Caper dolled up to support the industry with a fun-filled side match, high style costumes and their infectious enthusiasm.

Side Match Mania

Side matches at the Shooting Industry Masters have grown into an event favorite for attendees. For \$5 per attempt, shooters can participate in any number of side matches. This year, many of the side match hosts offered awards for their match's top shooter. Fellas, dames and Peeper Pass guests took part in 17 side matches at Kimber's "Lead Falls Place," Streamlight's "Speakeasy Road" and BLACKHAWK!'s "Bootlegger Bend," all of which encouraged a carnival-style atmosphere with company banners, numerous '20s-themed matches and thousands of rounds sent downrange.

GLOCK's "Roaring GLOCKS" event was the top-earning side match, raising \$1,910 in support of First Shots. The next two top-earning side matches were Benchmade's "Bootlegger Challenge" (\$1,670) and XS Sights' "Snitches Get Stitches" (\$1,650). In total, the side matches generated \$20,115 for First Shots.

"Supporting the NSSF First Shots Program via side matches is one of the many reasons to attend the Masters," said Bob Radecki, GLOCK national sales manager. "GLOCK has sponsored a side match for several years and we're very happy to raise the most money at this year's event — donating \$1,910 to First Shots via our industry friends' participation."

1) Masters shenanigans were in full swing as attendees attempted to escape the heat. 2) Dianna Liedorff (Team Benelli USA) poses after completing XS Sights' side match. 3) Team PolyOne receives instructions as they prepare to take part in the Rimfire event. 4) Larissa McHale (Team Rough Riders) runs through the Centerfire event. In a Masters twist, each team member was required to make a "getaway" by carrying a moneybag to complete the stage.

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Industry/Open Centerfire Champions — Shooters Supply 1 & 2



Open Rimfire Champions — BLACKHAWK!



Industry Team Tactics Champions — Davidson's 2



Industry Sports Clay Champions — STI

Chopper Squad Champions

New for this year, only the top-performing teams in the Industry and Open Class were recognized in each of the four official events: Centerfire, Rimfire, Sporting Clays and Team Tactics. For Centerfire and Rimfire, the scores were based on the cumulative time of the team on the stage and members of each team had to carry a “money bag” before making a getaway to the next part of the stage.

As with previous years, the Masters doesn't announce the scores of teams — which adds to the fun of the event, as teams grapple to outdo each other in stretching the truth on how well they shot each stage.

Shooters Supply didn't have to worry about lying too much, as they dominated the Centerfire event. Shooters Supply Team 2 had the fastest cumulative time in the Industry Class (Lewis Christopher, Nicholas Christopher, Travis Fitzpatrick, Logan Fitzpatrick) and Shooters Supply Team 1 were the Open Class champions (Steve Griffin, Jim Johnson, Mark Itzstein, Jack Jawor).

Even in today's tight market, Masters sponsors, teams and attendees came out to support the shooting sports — keeping it vibrant, alive and hitting on all eight.

In the Rimfire event, Ruger Team 1 was the Industry's top team (David McDaniel, Phil Hannum, Robert Kallio, Rick Foley), while the Rimfire Open champion was Team BLACKHAWK! (Rob Gates, Chuck Buis, Todd Jarrett, Bob McNulty).

STI took the spoils as the Sporting Clays champion for the Industry (Jens Krogh, Chad Rhea, David Cupp, Bobbi Hedegard), and Luth-AR hit the most clays in the Open Class (Jim Clark, Bruce Piatt, Tate Moots, Randy Luth).

For Team Tactics, Davidson's Team 2 had the fastest time for the Industry (Seth Heinbaugh, Porter Walters, Gina Perona, Sabrina Belotti) and Team Brownells was the Open Class champions (Roy Hill, Ryan Hennig, Paul Levy, Sarah Beard [USA Shooting]).

Special Recognitions

During the Masters Awards Banquet, Randy Molde and Russ Thurman, Masters match director, presented the Founder's Award to David Shaw, Fiocchi Ammunition marketing director. Shaw played an instrumental role in the early success of the Masters and came up with the concept that led to this annual industry event. He was presented a custom knife made by Phil Evans of Glenview Forge. Based in Columbus, Evans forged knives onsite at the Claythorne Lodge during the match.

Before the Masters Raffle, *American Handgunner* Publisher Roy Huntington provided an anecdote on the strength of the industry and how the people in it are “the glue that holds our industry together.” Even in today's tight market, Masters sponsors, teams and attendees came out to support the shooting sports — keeping it vibrant, alive and hitting on all eight for future generations to enjoy. This is why Masters sponsors and teams will always be the Bee's Knees!

2015 Participating Teams

Benchmark	Kahr Firearms Group
Benelli USA	Kimber
Beretta	Leupold & Stevens*
Big Rock Sports	Lipseys
BLACKHAWK!	Luth-AR
Brownells	MKS Supply
Browning	MTM Molded Products
Bushnell	Nation's Best Sports
Cabela's	NSSF*
Century Arms	O.F. Mossberg & Sons
Chattanooga Shooting Supplies	Oneida Molded Plastics
Colt's Manufacturing Co.	PolyOne*
ConvExx/Freeman	Remington Outdoor Co.
Crimson Trace	Ruger*
CrossBreed Holsters*	Shooters Supply*
Daniel Defense*	Sierra Bullets
Davidson's Inc.*	SIG SAUER
DeadRinger	SRC Sharps Rifle Co.
Diamondback Firearms	STI International
DoubleStar Corp.	Streamlight*
EAA Corp.	Taurus USA
Federal Premium	The Rough Riders
Fiocchi Ammunition	Timney Triggers
Freedom Hunters	Trijicon Inc.
Gerber Gear	Walther Arms
GLOCK Inc.	Warne Scope Mounts
Gun Talk Media	Winchester Ammunition
GunBroker.com*	XS Sight Systems
Hodgdon	Zanders Sporting Goods**
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Howard Leight	* 2 Teams
I.C.E. Training	** 3 Teams

Know Your Onions!

To relive the excitement of the 13th Annual Shooting Industry Masters, visit www.shootingindustry.com/masters to view footage of the event and additional photo galleries.

Masters Events

CENTERFIRE

Hornady's "Chopper's Alley"
Ruger's "Bean Shooter Blvd."

RIMFIRE

Smith & Wesson's "Roscoe Retreat"
Leupold's "Fumbling Flippers"

SPORTING CLAYS

Brownells' "Red Giggie Waters"
Zanders' "Bluenose Bay"

TEAM TACTICS

Taurus' "Gumshoe Gulch"

Masters Side Matches

Benchmark

"Bootlegger Challenge"

Benelli USA

"M3K Moonshine"

Cody Firearms Museum

"Untouchables Ambush"

FMG

"Five Stand Scatter"

Freedom Hunters

"Aerial Assault"

GLOCK Inc.

"Roaring GLOCKS"

HPR

"Yesterday vs. Tomorrow Shootout"

Kahr Arms

"Thompson Shootout"

MKS Supply/Inland Manufacturing

"Audie Murphy Pillbox Showdown"

PolyOne

"St. Valentine's Day Shootout"

Sharps Rifle Co.

"Sharpshooter's Power Spin"

STI International

"Texas Two-Step"

Taurus USA

"Dustbowl Shootout"

Umarex

"Air Masters"

Walther Arms

"The Shootout At Fort Smith"

Winchester Ammunition

"Long Beard XR Still Target Challenge"

XS Sights

"Snitches Get Stiches"

Looking To The Future

To stay up-to-date on the latest Masters announcements, visit www.shootingindustry.com/masters and "Like" the Masters Facebook page at www.facebook.com/shootingindustrymasters. ©

The GunBroker.com gang looks ready for a turf war at the Masters' Big Shot Ball.



STRENGTH IN HANDGUNS

DEALERS IDENTIFY AND RESPOND TO TRENDS SHAPING HANDGUN SALES

BY KEVIN RUSSELBURG

Dealers are accustomed to making adjustments when it comes to shifts in the marketplace. Seasonality of items and stocking new models entering the market have long been common considerations, but how are dealers reacting to overall trends taking place in the handgun marketplace?

Informed dealers and instructors alike agree the “perfect gun” is solely dependent on the customer. Ultimately, your handgun customers must be comfortable with the gun they choose, including its action, recoil and frame size. Narrowing down the selection for each individual starts with the intended purpose of the gun. For example, a customer looking for a target handgun would yield different results

Ruger's new Redhawk is chambered in .45 Auto and .45 Colt, the first Redhawk model capable of shooting both revolver- and pistol-caliber bullets from the same chamber. It features a 4.2-inch barrel and checkered hardwood grips.

Davidson's is now offering an exclusive line of SCCY Blue pistols. Chambered in 9mm, the four new Davidson's exclusives are the SCCY CPX-1-CBSB, CPX-2-CBSB, CPX-1-TTSB (below) and CPX-2-TTSB.

than a concealed-carry customer. The ability to respond to these varying purposes requires maintaining a wide selection — so it's important for dealers to offer a variety of models, frame sizes and calibers to fit those individual needs.

THE USUAL SUSPECTS

In talking with other dealers, it's interesting to note no particular manufacturer or handgun model is currently dominating sales, but small- and medium-sized, polymer frame semiautomatics still hold the top spots for handgun sales — especially for the concealed carry market.

“The GLOCK 17, 19, Smith & Wesson SHIELD and the Springfield XD series of pistols still sell very well and we try to keep as many of them in stock as we can,” said Barry Soskin, owner of Lombard Gun Shop and Article II Range in Lombard, Ill. “It's difficult to say how much impact the GLOCK 43 will have on sales, because they're still very difficult to get right now.”

Tim Holladay is the owner of Doc's Guns and Ammo, a firearms and accessory store in Eureka, Mo., and he noted 9mm handguns outsell handguns of other calibers for a variety of reasons.

Ruger Redhawk

Davidson's SCCY Blue



CORBON Urban Response 9mm



Walther's CCP (Concealed Carry Pistol) in 9mm features SOFTCOIL gas-delayed blowback technology to enhance shootability for this concealable semiauto. For defense in populated urban areas, CORBON expanded its Urban Response series to include a 9mm +P 100-grain round, which has a new gilding metal jacket filled with a soft lead core that forms into a patented "V" shape.

Walther CCP

"Handguns in 9mm continue to be the best-selling caliber because of things such as magazine capacity, the cartridge is readily available and reasonably priced. The manageability of the recoil is also a very big consideration for many shooters when buying a 9mm handgun," Holladay said.

Although trends in the current market tend to favor new shooters, and semiautomatics, there's still a considerable amount of activity with revolver and 1911 styles as well. "These models continue to have steady sales, but not really a growth area especially when it comes to new shooters," Holladay added.

AN OFFER THEY CAN'T REFUSE

Manufacturer incentives are helping dealers drive sales as well. Traditional cash rebates don't have nearly as much of an impact as free accessories. Additional magazines, cases, holsters, etc., are very attractive bonuses for purchases, especially for new shooters.

"Manufacturer incentives definitely help make the sale, especially when it comes to new shooters making their first purchase," said Holladay.

In addition to manufacturer incentives, shop owners are also providing their own deals to drive new sales. For those dealers with gun ranges, rental programs help by exposing customers to a variety of options to try out before purchasing. The cost is relatively low to the dealer and the customer can find the make and model that's right for them.

Package deals — such as range bags, hearing and eye protection — along with instruction and range time are useful to attract first-time buyers and casual shooters. It's not uncommon for someone who purchases their first firearm to come back in just a few days, or weeks to make another purchase. This is why offering service beyond the sale is extremely important to these buyers.

As an incentive to new shooters and new customers in general, many dealers are offering basic pistol instruction as an additional service that can be included or discounted with the sale.

ADDITIONAL MAGAZINES, CASES, HOLSTERS, ETC., ARE VERY ATTRACTIVE BONUSES FOR PURCHASES, ESPECIALLY FOR NEW SHOOTERS.

"We always provide a one-hour lesson for free, and a range pass with any purchase," Soskin said. The range pass provides access to Lombard Gun Shop and Article II Range's 32-lane indoor pistol and high-power range — offering one of the largest varieties of modern and unique selections of firearms in the area. Customers will also find two full-time gunsmiths on site.

Dealers report manufacturer rebates have increased handgun sales in their stores. Springfield's current "Gear Up & Go!" promotion is giving customers \$135 worth of free gear with the purchase of any handgun.





IT'S LADIES NIGHT

One obvious shift in the marketplace you've likely noticed in your store is the growing number of women trying out and purchasing handguns. This trend appears to be consistent across all regions and is a significant shift toward women becoming interested in the shooting sports. The reason for their interest varies as much as the types of handguns they're buying, but one thing is certain — women are educated on what they want before making a purchase.

Doc's Guns & Ammo carries a wide range of small- and medium-frame semiautomatic handguns to support the increased number of women shooters. Tim Holladay shows some of the features and benefits of a polymer semiauto to a customer.

Manufacturers have responded to this growing trend by offering several models in pink and purple versions. While these do attract a certain percentage of the market, most women are not as interested in the cuteness factor as much as they are comfort and feel.

"Ten years ago I would walk onto the floor and see a bunch of men standing around talking. Today I see pink and purple. Men are there with their wives, but I also see women coming in alone, or as part of a group of women. They educate themselves via the Internet. They come in knowing what they're looking for," Soskin added.

While some women are purchasing handguns for personal protection, others are getting involved out of curiosity, or participating as part of a group activity with other women. Some ranges are even offering "ladies only" classes as well as a "ladies night" where they can shoot and socialize with other women interested in the sport.

"One night a week, we offer a ladies night program where women shoot for free, and the response has been tremendous. We also offer women-only shooting competitions and the interest in that area is growing," Soskin said.

The women purchasing primarily for self-defense tend to gravitate toward small-frame revolvers because of their concealable size, and they feel more comfortable with their ease of use. Small- and medium-frame semiautomatics tend to be preferred by women purchasing for sporting, recreation and in-home protection.

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RIMFIRE WOES

Not all current trends in the industry are positive. Over the last couple years, the lack of .22 LR ammunition has been the biggest negative impact on the industry.

"I've owned and operated Article II since 1977 and I've never seen a shortage of ammo like we've experienced over the past two years," Soskin said. "I don't have enough .22's to sell to the general public. I use everything I have for classes and range rentals."

According to Soskin, this prolonged shortage will take away an important "rite of passage" for many younger shooters.

"Ultimately, in my opinion, this will hurt the industry. Younger shooters who traditionally train on the lower recoil, inexpensive ammo won't enter the market until they're older and can handle larger centerfire options. Walking into a store and buying a .22 LR target pistol off the shelf for training was once a rite of passage. Now they sit due to the lack of affordable, readily available, good quality .22 LR ammunition," he said.

CASTING A WIDER NET

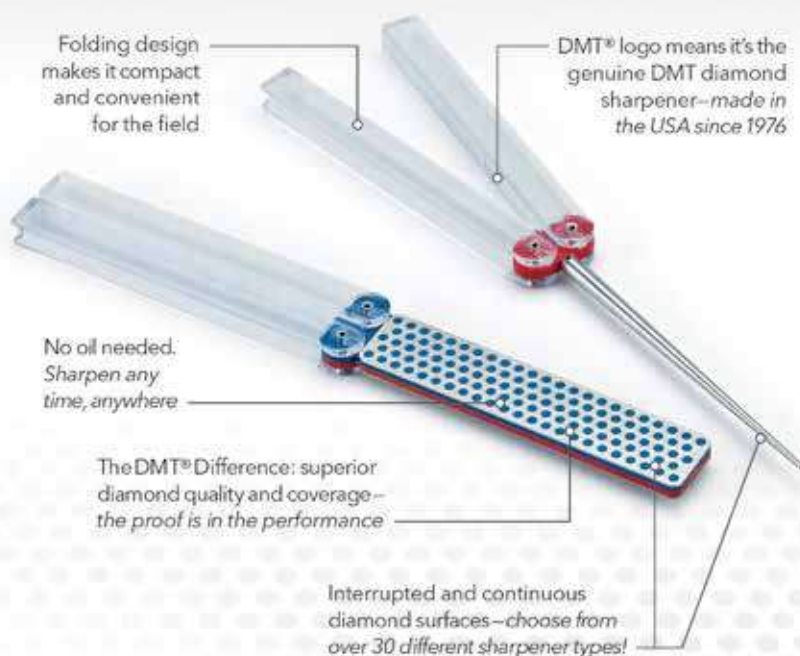
Dealers are turning to social media as a means to reach new and existing customers. Facebook and Twitter are proving to be effective, inexpensive tools for staying in touch with their customer base. These types of communication outlets allow dealers to instantly update their community with the newest and sometimes hard-to-get inventory.

"I update our Facebook page two or three times a day. When I receive a GLOCK 43 and post it to our Facebook page, it's gone within an hour," Holladay said. "It has been a great resource for updating customers about our inventory, announcing any specials we are offering, and attracting new customers with very little expense."

Other social media tools, such as Groupon, have been effective campaigns for attracting new customers from a much broader base. "It raises range awareness and allows us to reach people outside of our immediate area," Soskin stated. "I can run an ad at a very low cost and bring in groups for classes, which in turn, drives sales." ©

Kevin Russelburg is the owner/operator of Datum Arms, a firearms sales and training business located in Bolingbrook, Ill. Kevin is a U.S.M.C. Veteran, Concealed Carry and NRA-Certified Instructor and also deals in NFA Class III (SOT) transactions.

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KNIFE REPORT:

IN DEMAND BLADES AND MORE

FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT WITH INFLUX
OF YOUTH IN CUTLERY MARKET

BY PAT COVERT

If the level of consumer interest in the 2015 BLADE Show is any indicator on the future of the cutlery industry, then there's plenty of evidence to suggest a very healthy knife market for manufacturers and dealers. For years, cutlery professionals have worried about bringing young knifemakers into the fold — but now there's no reason to worry. New knife companies, young custom knifemakers and a hungry new generation of knife customers were everywhere at this year's BLADE Show. Established manufacturers have responded to this influx of new customers by adjusting their offerings to meet their interests with a variety of new offerings. In addition, the accessory end of the cutlery market continues to grow at an increasing rate. This year's BLADE showcased a number of new offerings that will pique the interest of your knife customers.

NOTABLE NEWCOMERS

Battle Horse Knives made a splash at BLADE this year thanks to a huge booth loaded with an array of knives. This energetic young company specializes in fixed blades for the outdoorsman and bushcrafter. One of our favorites is the Large Workhorse, an 8.5-inch overall camp knife at a reasonable MSRP of \$170.

Habilis Bushtools is another emerging young company with a focus on the hot bushcraft segment of the market. Their Nessmuk fixed blade (9.5 inches overall) features a large blade with a Scandi grind, perfect for a multitude of camp chores. MSRP is \$179.

New 2015 offerings from Steel Will Knives include the Chieftain 1610/1620 and Darkangel 900 (below). With blade lengths of 7.48 and 5.83 inches respectively, each fixed-blade knife will appeal to tactical customers.

Steel Will Knives has charged onto the cutlery scene the last few years and their new Censor 1300 series line of compact fixed blades will certainly add fuel to the company's momentum. These knives feature pistol grip-style handles available in three blade styles. MSRP is a highly affordable \$59.99, complete with an injection-molded adjustable sheath.

Ferrum Forge Knife Works, located in San Diego, offers high-end folders in limited runs. These are not for the faint of budget, but if you have an upscale clientele these are just the ticket. Ferrum does do a lot of business with dealers, reaching out to them via social media to promote their limited-run models — which are often sold out before they've finished production. Jason Brous made custom knives for several years before he shifted to mid-tech production knives under the name of Brous Blades to keep up with the demand. His Silent Hero folder is a rock-solid small folder with a nice entry-level MSRP of \$199.

Combative Edge's X9 folder is a mini bull shark in the hand. This upscale, aggressive titanium frame-lock folder features upscale S30V blade steel and clocks in at an MSRP of \$350.

Vehement Knives' Matt Martin crafts extremely well made edged tools. The Paragon spear-point fixed blade — coming in at 9.8 inches overall — is a rare blend of sleek and tough. The \$275 price tag is a great way to introduce your customers to handmade quality without the sticker shock.

NEW STYLES FORGED

Because of Spyderco's second-generation Manix 2's success, the company elected to add three new models to the line. Our pick is the new G-10-handled version, which kicks the desirability factor into high gear. MSRP is \$157.95.

Benchmark has a reputation for making some of the best upscale factory folders in the industry and their new model 761 Ti-Monolock carries on the company's repute. Titanium and M390 Super Steel make this frame-lock as close to custom quality as it gets. Its MSRP is \$390.

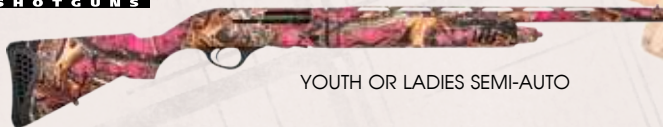
Continued on page 48





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Columbia River Knife & Tool (CRKT), in collaboration with custom knifemaker Lucas Burnley, has released a pair of runt folders called Squids. Only 4.49 inches fully open, the Squids can be had in a satin or black stone-wash finish, and at an MSRP of only \$29.99 they're bound to be a hit with young buyers on a budget.

Zero Tolerance, a division of KAI USA which also includes Kershaw and Shun (kitchen) knives, has new knife making waves with the new 0900 Les George designed folding titanium bowie. This little palm full of power rocks a titanium frame-lock and stonewashed S35VN clip-point blade. MSRP is \$240.

Taylor Brands' Schrade won the youth-driven BLADE Show 2015 People's Choice Award for their highly affordable, hard-working SCHF36 Frontier Drop Point fixed-blade. The SCHF 36 comes outfitted with a pouch on the sheath, which includes a ferro rod and sharpening stone — all at an MSRP of only \$43.74.

Böker USA has added two upscale additions to their popular Kwaiken line of Lucas Burnley flipper folder designs. These deluxe versions feature titanium and carbon fiber handles with MSRP prices of \$215 and \$229 respectively.



Built for skinning, the Appalachian from Emerson has a 3.7-inch blade, which comes in either a black or stone-washed finish.

TOPS Knives' popular Baja 3.0 fixed-blade now has a big brother: the Baja 4.5. This versatile drop-point style fixer features TOPS' Black River Wash blade finish with grooved green Micarta handle scales. MSRP is \$200.

Lansky is known for their mega line of sharpeners, but the past few years their knife collaborations with custom knife rock star Mikkell Willumsen have been turning heads. Their latest is the Responder X9. This folding knife is loaded with style at a very affordable MSRP of \$53.99.



Gerber introduced the new Gator Premium series of hunting knives earlier this year, with fixed-blade and folding models.



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Screw Set



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Tool Kit



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KRUDO Knives continues to be a leader in self-defense knives. One of Louis Krudo's latest is the KRONA folder, a beautifully designed everyday carry knife with a pistol grip handle and drop-point blade accessed via a flipper. MSRP is \$145.

Glen Klecker, owner of Klecker Knives, is one of the true innovators in the cutlery industry. Case in point: Klecker's new Abiqua Hunter drop-point fixed blade looks and feels outstanding in its own right, but press and slide the thumb jimping on the back of the blade and a gut hook is released for precision skinning. MSRP is \$129.

ACCESSORY ADD-ONS

Handgun customers familiar with the quality of VZ Grips will be interested in knowing the company has added knife scales to their line. They're starting with two popular Zero Tolerance models, the Ken Onion 0300 and Rick Hinderer 0560 series of knives. These G-10 scales come in a nice variety of eye pleasing designs and can be matched to your customers' favorite handgun.

Tuff-Writer has made a name for itself as a premier source for tough tactical pens. We like their Frontline Series pens, available in machined aluminum or upscale titanium at an MSRP of \$95 and \$210 respectively.

Work Sharp has expanded to include manual sharpeners in their lineup. New to the scene are the Guided Field Sharpener and a bench top Guided Sharpening System. These systems are easy to use and versatile as well. MSRP is \$34.95 for the field unit, \$59.95 for the bench top.

BLADE'S 2016 MILESTONE

In 2016, BLADE Show will celebrate its 35th year, showcasing thousands of products from nearly 800 exhibitors at the Cobb Galleria in Atlanta, June 3-5. For more information, visit www.bladeshow.com. ©



Capable as an everyday carry knife, CRKT's Ken Onion-designed Hootenanny features an IKBS ball bearing system to deploy the blade smoothly.

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BOWHUNTING BUSINESS

BY CAROLEE ANITA BOYLES

KNOW WHAT SELLS FOR BOWHUNTERS AND KEEP PRODUCTS IN INVENTORY



Easton Archery

Specialized archery shops are the norm these days, so much so many gun dealers don't even try to compete in archery and bowhunting. Gun dealers who carry bowhunting gear, however, say the right mix of products can enhance their sales to bowhunters and gun hunters alike.

Shaun Lacasse is one of the owners of The Gun Room in Portland, Ore. He said The Gun Room has carried bowhunting gear since about 1990.

"One big reason bowhunting products are important to us is the tag situation in Oregon," he said. "Hunters have to draw to get deer and elk tags in the better units. If a gun hunter isn't able to draw tags, he still has a much greater general tag opportunity if he bowhunts. So while he's accumulating preference points for the deer or elk hunt he wants, he can buy a general archery tag and have a good archery hunting opportunity."

As a result, many of The Gun Room's hunting customers are what Lacasse calls "crossover" customers. "We have the opportunity to sell them all the equipment they need to bowhunt and not burn their rifle points," he said.

In general, Lacasse said, his customers prefer higher-end bowhunting products. "They buy better quality stuff and replace it less often," he said. This means bigger sales but fewer of them. In terms of bows I only carry Hoyt, which are some of the best bows made."

When it comes to other bowhunting products, Lacasse sticks with what he terms "the basics."

"When I started carrying bowhunting products in 1990, I had a better selection," he said. "I phased out the stuff we didn't sell and just replaced with things such as calls and accessories people bought and needed. By doing this, I tie up less money in inventory and stay with products we know are going to turn."

Carrying the right mix of products can enhance your sales with bowhunters and gun hunters alike.

AN ADD-ON TO YOUR BUSINESS

For The Gun Room, Lacasse said, bowhunting is an additional business that coexists with the primary business, which is new guns, used guns, gun accessories and hunting gear.

"The main lines of bowhunting products we deal with are Hoyt, Easton, and Beman," he said. For customers who are looking for the ultimate in high-end arrows, Victory Archery has a full line of high-performance carbon fiber arrows; Bloodsport Impact Hunter Pro Hunter arrows utilize their proprietary Rugged Wrap in their carbon fiber arrows.

The Gun Room stocks two primary clothing lines, Stika and Core 4. "The cool thing about those clothing lines is they cross over," Lacasse said. "They're both hunting lines that work equally well for both bowhunters and rifle hunters, and it's all high-end stuff."

One thing reason why Lacasse sells bowhunting products so well is he is a long-time bowhunter himself.

"Every Friday night my father is on the range teaching people how to shoot shotguns, and I'm upstairs teaching other people to shoot bows," he said. "We live this. If I'm not here selling it, I'm out using it."

CROSSOVER APPEAL

At Midwestern Shooters Supply in Lomira, Wis., Randy Boelkow said the same customers who bowhunt also use guns to hunt.

"Carrying bowhunting products helps you bring in the person who does both," he said. "Bowhunting is complementary to the rest of it. When this happens, you sell more products — like tree stands — you already carry anyway."

Catering to bowhunters really helps sell clothing, Boelkow said.

**"EVERYBODY IS HUNTING WITH
CROSSBOWS RIGHT NOW
BECAUSE IT'S SOMETHING NEW
AND DIFFERENT."**

— RANDY BOELKOW, MIDWESTERN SHOOTERS SUPPLY

"Gun guys only buy so much clothing," he said. "If you're just a gun shop, it's kind of hard to stock enough clothing because you have to buy it in such big quantities. But when you bring the archery guys in, it's easier to stock clothing. This category is just kind of something you have to have."

In Wisconsin, Boelkow said, a big change recently took place in the state's crossbow market, "Crossbows were legalized a year ago, which has cut our regular bow sales probably in half. Everybody is hunting with crossbows right now because it's something new and different."

One trend in crossbows is toward smaller and lighter bows, such as the Barnett Raptor and Lady Raptor; also, Barnett's Recruit Lite Series is great for kids. The availability of crossbows is bringing new shooters into the field, according to Boelkow.

"It's bringing in ladies and kids," he said. "It's also bringing back older shooters who haven't been able to shoot a bow. Now they can hunt again." One brand of hunting clothing great for women, including bowhunters, is Prôis; it's high performance clothing designed by women, for women.



Victory Archery VAP Elite



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Dealers who carry the right mix of accessories for bowhunters will find there are additional sales opportunities beyond the bow. Clothing, packs, tree stands, arrows, vanes and bowhunting scopes are just some of many add-ons.

The biggest selling archery equipment in his store recently, Boelkow said, has been bowfishing equipment.

"Sales of bowfishing gear are on the rise," he said. "Bowfishing has been around for a long time, but it's really taken off in this area recently. Bowfishing tournaments are getting really big." Muzzy has introduced the Addict Bowfishing Kit to help bowhunters get started in bowfishing.



One trend in crossbows is toward smaller, lighter bows — like the new Horton Storm RDX. These lighter crossbows are bringing women, children and older shooters into the bowhunting market.

Boelkow carries several bowlines, including PSE, Hoyt and G5.

"In sights, I carry HHA," he said. "All the Hoyt Fuse stuff sells really well for us. Carbon Express sells really well for us. We sell a lot of G5 and Rage broadheads."

Advertising has a lot of effect on sales, Boelkow said. "What sells really well is whatever is being advertised nationally, and who's shooting it," he said. "You can have a great product, but if it's not nationally advertised, it usually doesn't last too long."

"YOU CAN HAVE A GREAT PRODUCT, BUT IF IT'S NOT NATIONALLY ADVERTISED, IT USUALLY DOESN'T LAST TOO LONG."

DO EVENTS IMPACT SALES?

In mid-August, Midwestern Shooters Supply holds its annual Fall Fest. There are specials throughout the store, trial guns, vendor reps, the Sportsman's Rummage, a gun auction, raffles, food, entertainment, pig wrestling and community fundraisers.

"We have 13 acres, and we do the Fall Fest there,"

Boelkow said. "We don't charge anything for people to attend, and we bring in about 10,000 people. All the archery reps are here, and people can come try anything they want from crossbows to fishing bows to regular bows."

When Boelkow brings new bowhunting products into his inventory, he introduces them here. "The Fall Fest is like a sports

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show, but we do a lot more than just have sporting goods on display. Last year we served more than 1,200 people at the fish fry. We have a pig-wrestling contest for the kids on Saturday in a swimming pool. The local fire department does the beer and we have bands at night," he noted.

Boelkow has plenty of room to carry both guns and bows; the store has more than 30,000 square feet of usable space. "We have an indoor archery range and an indoor pistol range," he said.

Some local archery shops have restaurants in them, according to Boelkow.

"I know one shop runs a pool league, dart league and an archery league on the same night. They also run horseshoes and volleyball," he observed.

Boelkow noted the prevalence of indoor leagues probably is related to seasons and climate.

"Once you get into December, indoor archery leagues are huge," he said. "People want to make a night of it. They want to have food and refreshments. We don't have this because we have a pistol range, but the big archery places run it as a whole business."

However you approach it, carrying bowhunting products in your gun shop means better inventory, crossover customers and more dollars to your bottom line. ©



Dealers report the sales of bowfishing products are on the rise, and Muzzy's Addict Bowfishing Kit provides a convenient way for bowhunters to crossover to bowfishing. The kit includes a 58-inch recurve bow with a 40-pound draw at 28 inches, the XD Pro Reel, Fish Bone arrow and more.

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FOCUS: BOWHUNTING MARKET

SALES FOR BOWS, ARROWS DRIVE \$1 BILLION MARKET

BY ROB SOUTHWICK
& CODY LARRIMORE



Bowhunting has grown in recent years, which could be attributed to archers having a major role in top-rated movies and television shows. And, what was once a market driven entirely by men is seeing an influx of women — who now represent close to 5 percent of the bowhunting community.

Southwick Associates' HunterSurvey and ShooterSurvey research panels provide insights into the bowhunting market. These panels track consumer buying habits in all facets of hunting and shooting, offering a close look at bowhunting trends, the makeup of the bowhunting market, what consumers are buying and the hunting and activities they prefer.

Excluding crossbows and crossbow accessories, Southwick Associates estimates the bowhunting market exceeded \$1 billion in sales in 2014. The largest category, with over \$500 million in sales was bows (compounds, recurves and longbows). Next, arrow sales constituted \$165 million. Other top categories include broadheads (\$80 million) and targets (\$65 million).

So, who are these bowhunters? Data collected from HunterSurvey and ShooterSurvey show the majority of bowhunters are 24- to 31-years-old and represent 31 percent of participants. The 45- to 54-year-old age group holds the second largest percentage with 30 percent of bowhunters. From this data, 26 percent of bowhunters have a household income of \$50,000 to \$75,000, and 31 percent have four or more years of college education.

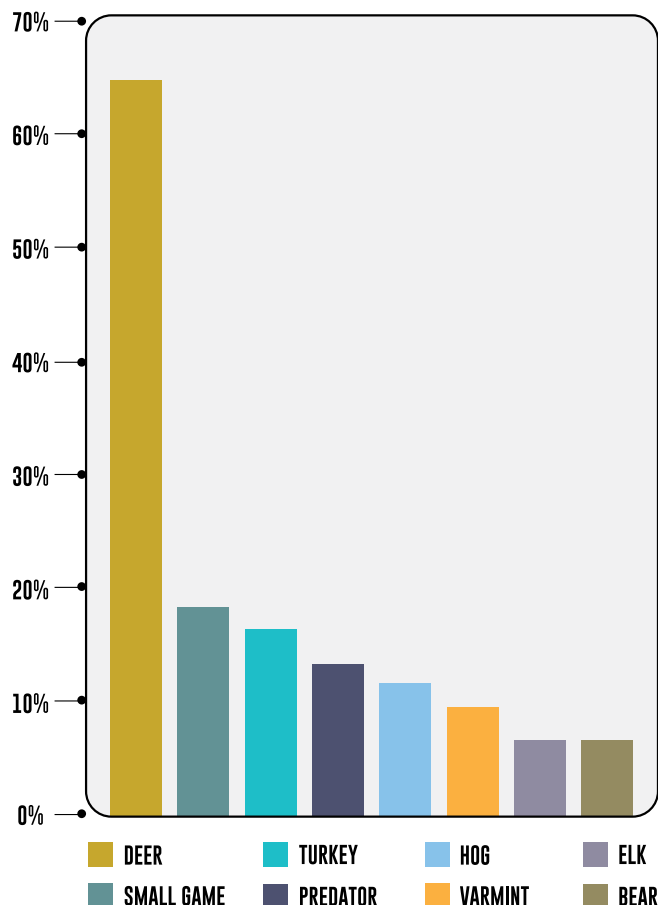
Not surprisingly, deer — including mule deer, whitetail, Sitka, and blacktail — are the species most often pursued, with 65 percent of bowhunters targeting them in 2014. The next most popular species targeted by bowhunters include small game, turkeys, predators, hogs and varmints.

Bowhunters' Spending Habits

There are many items a bowhunter must purchase to be successful in the field, representing great sales opportunities for the smart retailer. Bowhunters love accessories, especially compound bow users, who represent 87 percent of all bow sales. Examining all retail transactions that involved bowhunting supplies, arrows were purchased 52 percent of the time. Broadheads were the next most purchased item present in 44 percent of all bowhunting transactions. Rounding out the top five bowhunting items purchased include fletching (19%), bows (18%) and targets (15%).

HunterSurvey and ShooterSurvey also report where bowhunters make their purchases from various types of retailers: varying from websites to big-box stores, gun shows, expos and more. In three out of the top five categories (fletching, bows and arrows),

GAME PURSUED BY BOWHUNTERS



local stores show the highest frequency. In the other two categories, broadheads and targets, buying at outdoor specialty stores provided the most sales.

When examining which media sources bowhunters use to gain information on hunting, internet/social media is the top choice and served 82 percent of the bowhunting community. Internet usage is higher among bowhunters compared to firearm hunters, which is consistent with bowhunters being younger. Other top sources include magazines (74%), television (65%), and state regulation guides (62%). The top three TV shows watched by bowhunters is "Bone Collector," "North American Whitetail" and "Jim Shockey's Hunting Adventures."

For more information on bowhunting, including regional insights, prices paid or custom research into new products or brands, contact Southwick Associates at info@southwickassociates.com or visit www.southwickassociates.com. ©

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The new PROMAG **Rollermag RM30** magazine has four wheels in its new friction-free, anti-tilt follower. The Rollerfollower creates a smooth, rolling, controlled feed to reduce friction in the magazine's polymer body. Instead of sliding up and down the inside of the magazine, it rolls smoothly without contact to the body. The new Rollermag RM30 works with MSR-style rifles.



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Federal Premium has added the .380 Auto to the company's **Personal Defense HST** lineup. The .380 Auto is an option for micro-size concealed-carry pistols. The HST 99-grain .380 round was redesigned to deliver best-in-caliber expansion. Its specially designed hollowpoint won't plug; the jacket and core hold together to provide almost 100 percent weight retention. The construction ensures micro-size handguns deliver the power needed for personal defense situations.



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The **P-308 Riflescope** from Nikon has a 4-12 magnification, a 40mm objective, fully multi-coated lenses and a Nikon BDC 800 reticle. A new addition to Nikon's line of .308Win. riflescopes, the P-308 is fitted with exposed, spring-loaded Instant Zero-Reset Turrets with easy-grip course knurling. This makes in-field adjustments easier by allowing shooters to reset their turrets back to zero after sighting-in. The P-308 is waterproof, fogproof and shockproof.



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A series of **Duck Commander ProStaff-endorsed knives** is now available from Kershaw Knives. The new series includes four pocketknives and an ax: the Rayne (model 7402CD) with a classic clip-point blade, a steel-and-G-10 handle and reversible pocketclip; Bisland (model 7422DC) with a 3.24-inch blade and a reversible, deep-carry pocketclip; Dunbar (model 7420DC) with a drop-point blade and a deep-carry pocketclip; Tickfaw (model 7418DC) with a 2-inch blade; and the Quax (model 7400DC), an ax with a duck-shaped head, a solid full-tang construction and sure-grip textured handle.



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Klecker Knives & Tools

www.shootingindustry.com/company/klecker-knives

The **DK-151 Abiqua Hunter Light Weight Drop Point Hunting Knife** is an all-around hunting knife. It has a hollow, ground knife blade with full tang. The DK-151 has black G-10 or molded handles (two-toned in Hunter Orange or Layered Brown) with thumb jimping and easy-to-grip finger notches. Its 3 7/8-inch fine edge blade is designed for smooth and firm cutting. A full-size removable gut hook and bottle opener are concealed in the handle.



Clinger Holsters

(479) 650-0379

www.shootingindustry.com/company/clinger-holsters

The **Stingray Holster**, manufactured by Clinger Holsters, is compact with adjustable weapon tension. It completely encases the user's firearm in sweat-proof Kydex. The holster features anodized hardware, which is also sweat proof. The Stingray's belt tab is near the grip of the gun, which pushes it close to the body to eliminate "printing." It's available in right- and left-handed models. Like other Clinger Holster models, the Stingray is thin, lightweight and designed for deep concealment.



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Frankford Arsenal

(573) 445-9200

www.shootingindustry.com/company/frankford-arsenal

The new **Platinum Series Hand Deprimer Tool** from Frankford Arsenal is made of die cast aluminum and features a full-length ergonomic grip. The fully contained operating system captures the spent primers in a collection tube, which can be removed and emptied with ease. The Hand Deprimer features the Universal Collet System to handle brass from .20-caliber to .338 Lapua. It can also deprime pistol brass and Military crimped primers quickly and easily.



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The Pulsar **Quantum XD38S** and **XD50S** thermal imaging monoculars are lightweight and weather resistant, able to withstand harsh environments and conditions. They are ideal for use in fugitive searches, surveillance activities, accident investigation, locating evidence, search and rescue and marine patrol. The Quantum thermals feature an advanced OLED display (640x480 pixels) and a high-resolution microbolometer sensor (384x288 pixels) with seven different color modes for optimal viewing in a variety of scenarios. Users can switch between "white hot" and "black hot" to make targets distinctly visible over 1,000 yards away. The XD38S and XD50S offer a 50-hertz frame rate for a clear image of fast-moving objects. They are engineered to track targets quickly and easily.



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The **AERO AC-15 Complete Rifle** is budget-friendly and can easily be upgraded over time. It has an M4 upper receiver with a 16-inch barrel in 5.56 NATO made of chromoly Vanadium. It also has a Magpul MBUS rear sight and an A2 front sight, a standard M4 carbine handguard with a double heat shield and an A2 Flash Hider muzzle device. The AC-15's Gen 2 lower receiver has a flared magwell and upper tension screw and includes an MSR Lower Parts Kit and an MSR/M4 Buffer Kit. It also has an M4 collapsible stock and an A2 pistol grip. The AC-15 rifle includes a Magpul 30-round PMAG magazine.



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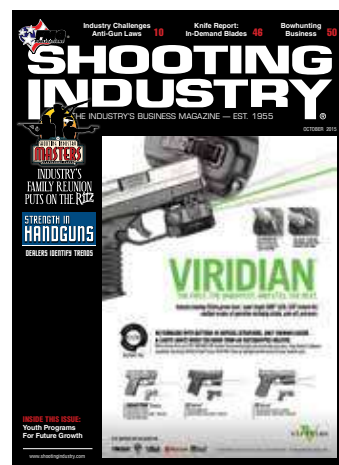
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INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

Advertiser	Page	Advertiser	Page	Advertiser	Page
American Outdoor Canopies	20	Luth-AR	60	Taurus	8
American Tactical Imports	C4	Lyman Products	48	Trijicon Inc.	55
Americase	24	Maglula Ltd.	5	United Sporting Companies	18
Anderson Mfg.	35	Make Big Noise	20	Viridian Green Laser	C1
Ballistol USA	6	Maxpedition Hard-Use Gear	3	Zanders Sporting Goods	27
Black Hills Ammunition	47	Meprolight	53	zMAX Lubricants	49
Chiappa Firearms	16	MKS Supply	57		
Clinger Holsters	29	N82 Tactical	53		
Crimson Trace	13	NSSF	33		
Crow Shooting Supply	22	Numrich Gun Parts	57		
Daniel Defense	11	Outdoor Business Network	58		
Davidson's	15	PrOlix Lubricants	59		
Diamond Machining Technology	45	Pyramyd Air	45		
Eagle Imports	44	RamRodz	31		
European American Armory	9	Republic Forge	25		
Hexmag	5	Ruger	7		
Hogue Inc.	12	Security Equipment Corp.	55		
Independent Sports Supply	57	See All Open Sights	23		
Interstate Arms Corp.	14,31	Shooting Search	58		
Joseph Chiarello & Co.	20	SHOT Show	19		
Kalashnikov USA	C2	SIG SAUER	17		
LaserMax	21, 52	Skyline Toolworks	27		
Legacy Sports	47	TALO Distributors	C3		



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Firearm Sales Rebound

In a welcome turnaround, firearms sales continue to increase. After a stall earlier in the year, sales began to stabilize in May and then posted a surprise jump in June.

Firearm background checks increased 10 percent in June as compared to June 2014. The 886,825 (NSSF-adjusted) background checks even bested June 2013 (the golden year) by 1.7 percent, making it the highest June in the history of NICS.

Why the increase?

“We had a roughly 10 percent increase in June; it was kind of shocking to see,” said Justin Hardy, manager of Rock House Pawn in Meridian, Miss. Hardy says a large segment of the increase was from distributor/manufacturer deals and discounts. He’s also seeing a large increase in women gun owners.

“The amount of women gun buyers is at an all-time high in my area,” Hardy said.

Other dealers also cite major distributor and manufacturing promotions that have drawn consumers back into gun shops as

key to increased sales. Dealers have also greatly increased their in-shop promotions.

In July, the industry set another historical high in the number of background checks. NICS conducted 946,528 (NSSF-adjusted) background checks, a 15.9 percent increase over July 2014 and a 10.67 percent jump over July 2013.

In August, NICS conducted 1,031,959 (NSSF-adjusted) background checks, the second-highest August on record. It was a 4.3 percent increase over August 2014 and only 1.05 percent below the record-high August 2012.

While the NICS data doesn’t actually reflect one-for-one sales, it is the most up-to-date indicator of conditions in the marketplace. We use NSSF-adjusted data because NSSF removes NICS purpose code permit checks, CCW permit application checks and checks on active CCW permit databases.

Visit www.nssf.org/research

NICS BACKGROUND CHECKS: NSSF-ADJUSTED JAN. 2012 – AUGUST 2015

YEAR	JAN.	FEB.	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	TOTALS
2012	920,840	1,266,344	1,189,344	931,660	840,412	846,437	853,355	1,042,924	1,007,259	1,118,994	1,525,177	2,237,731	13,780,285
2013	1,790,154	1,634,309	1,501,730	1,185,231	974,457	872,025	855,259	1,016,559	1,034,701	1,113,818	1,308,100	1,520,529	14,796,872
2014	970,510	1,264,010	1,224,705	988,726	877,655	805,571	816,588	989,337	1,024,272	1,174,797	1,329,688	1,624,524	13,090,383
2015	1,052,441	1,280,825	1,187,823	987,698	918,707	886,825	946,528	1,031,959	—	—	—	—	8,292,806

NSSF removes NICS purpose codes used by several states for CCW application checks and other purposes. The removal of this data provides a more accurate report of background checks conducted for the purchase of firearms. Visit www.nssf.org/research.

Launching 2016 Business Year

The industry rendezvous in New Orleans this month for the NASGW Expo & Annual Meeting — and the launch of the 2016 business year.

We can expect a significant uptick in new product introductions along with plenty of sweet deals for buyers. New products are key to continued stimulation of the consumer base — something many manufacturers failed to remember during the hot sales of 2013.

Many delayed developing new products, which proved detrimental when sales cooled.

That has now changed. Reports from manufacturers: We’re back with major product introductions.

The NASGW event will be held Oct. 27–30. For all the details and to download the expo’s mobile app, visit www.nasgw.org.



Dealers Battle Anti-Gun Legislation

Salutes to the increasing number of gun dealers who are taking direct action against anti-gun laws. In August, four California gun dealers filed an opening brief, asking the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals to strike down a law that, they argue, is unconstitutional and violates the First Amendment.

The gun dealers argue that California Penal Code section 26820 — first enacted in 1923 — prevents them from displaying any “handgun or imitation handgun, or [a] placard advertising the sale or other transfer thereof” anywhere that can be seen outside their stores and “unconstitutionally prevents firearms

dealers from advertising even the most basic commercial information — ‘Handguns for Sale’ — at their places of business.”

“I run one of the most heavily regulated and inspected businesses in existence, but it’s still illegal for me to show customers I sell handguns until after they walk in the door,” said Michael Baryla, owner of Tracy Rifle and Pistol. “That’s about as silly a law as you could imagine, even here in California.”

Last November, the State Department of Justice cited Tracy Rifle and Pistol for posting such signage.

Fight on!

For The Record

In response to PETA’s failed attempt to prevent the “Pilot Archery Management Deer Hunting Program” in two Montgomery County (Maryland) parks, the animal rights group responded, in part, with:

“We are extremely disappointed by the ruling and deeply saddened about the fate of the deer, who are Montgomery County’s gentle Cecils. The day will come when human beings must recognize wild animals have a right to live on their ancestral lands and not be forced out and slaughtered simply for living as they have for generations.”

My head hurts. That’s all. ☹

Hang On! There's Still A Year Of Presidential Campaigns

We're more than a year away from the 2016 presidential election. A year! Anyone already worn out from the full on, force-on-force, magnum blast of presidential campaigning?

Buckle up and hang on. This is going to be a wild ride!

For the first time in several presidential election cycles, the "gun issue" is a key factor. The last time firearms were a real, major issue in a presidential election was in 2000 when then-Vice President Al Gore suffered a backlash for the Clinton Administration's anti-gun policies and rhetoric. Since then, presidential candidates have avoided the gun issue, for the most part.

In 2008, then-Senator Barack Obama created a firestorm when he belittled those who "cling to guns or religion." Thereafter, he pretty much avoided the gun issue during the 2008 and 2012 election cycles.

Today, guns are one of the top domestic issues that have emerged as more "important" than during the 2012 election.

According to a CNN/ORC Poll conducted in early September, 42 percent of voters say the country's gun policy was an "extremely important" issue in considering who would gain their vote for president. In 2011, the number was 22 percent. A jump of 20 percent is significant.

A key element in the poll was expanded background checks, which is a common theme in today's presidential campaigns.

"Even among those who say it is now too easy to buy a gun, just small majorities believe that implementing more comprehensive background checks for all gun purchases would be likely to stop gun purchases by the mentally ill (53%) or convicted criminals (55%)," CNN reports.

That hasn't curtailed the call for increased background checks by Democratic candidates. Hillary Clinton ramped up her gun control position following the church shooting in Charleston, S.C.

"We have to take on the gun lobby ... This is a controversial issue. I am well aware of that. But I think it is the height of irresponsibility not to talk about it," Clinton said, during a campaign speech in Hanover, N.H. in July.

In a new video from NSSF — the first #Gunvote release for the 2016 campaign season — Clinton pushes her gun control agenda during a campaign stop.

"There is so much evidence that if guns were not so readily available, if we had universal background checks, if we could just



Hillary Clinton pushes for universal background checks during a campaign stop. Six presidential candidates are featured in the new NSSF #Gunvote video. Watch the video at www.nssf.org/gunvote.

put some timeout between the person who is upset because he got fired, or the domestic abuse or whatever other motivation may be working on someone who does this, then maybe we could prevent this kind of carnage," she said.

The NSSF #Gunvote video, "Presidential Candidates on Firearms; In their own Words," also includes Gov. Chris Christie (R-N.J.), Gov. John Kasich (R-Ohio), Martin O'Malley (D), Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Donald Trump (R). NSSF plans to release additional videos "To help gun owners to register to vote and evaluate candidates' positions on Second Amendment and sportsmen's issues." This is an important service. Thank you, NSSF.

Likely, most of us are very clear on where we stand regarding the "gun issue." However, there are some slight, but important, differences in how even the most-ardent pro-gun candidates address the topic. It's important to know what those are and educate our customers, friends, neighbors and associates on the issues.

Yes, we're more than a year away from entering booths to cast our votes for the next president. And, yes, the rhetoric can be tiring, but there is much at stake. The next president, who will be sworn into office in January 2017, will wield significant power in shaping the future of the gun issue and the industry.

Visit www.nssf.org/gunvote

Vista Outdoor Delivers Message

Vista Outdoor recently published its "2015 Corporate Social Responsibility" (CSR) report that will grab the attention of many; even those not in the "gun community."

This is a polished report. Attractive and straightforward, it's void of long, dreary narrative. It captures the company's history of "safety, ethics, environmental stewardship and conservation, and community service" in a way that's appealing.

"Being a responsible corporate citizen is a priority at Vista Outdoor and part of the company's culture," said Mark DeYoung, Vista Outdoor chairman and CEO. "We stress safety in our workplace and in the use of our products. We take pride in our commitment to ethics and compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. We believe in being good stewards of the environment, both through our business practices and in promoting conservation

through partnerships with other organizations. And we embrace the idea of 'giving back' — helping those in need in the communities where we live and work."

Well said. And, well presented. The 19-page CSR report can be viewed at: www.vistaoutdoor.com/social-responsibility.



Editor's Note: In December's Outdoor Marketplace column, Taylor Smithfield will provide an extended look at this report and highlight the importance of how your customers view your business in the community.

Continued on page 61



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